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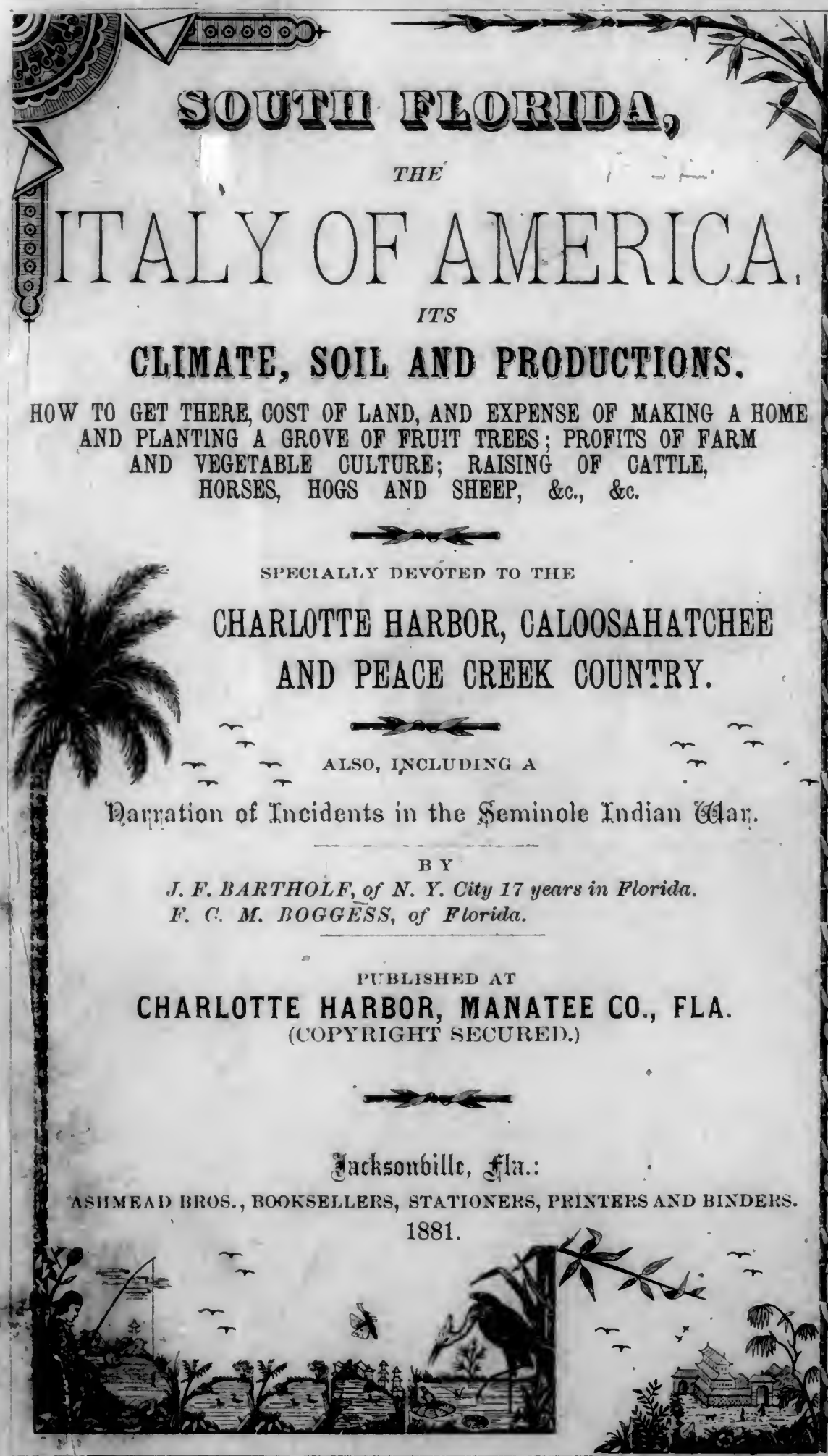
**SOUTH FLORIDA,**  
*THE*  
**ITALY OF AMERICA.**  
*ITS*  
**CLIMATE, SOIL AND PRODUCTIONS.**  
HOW TO GET THERE, COST OF LAND, AND EXPENSE OF MAKING A HOME  
AND PLANTING A GROVE OF FRUIT TREES; PROFITS OF FARM  
AND VEGETABLE CULTURE; RAISING OF CATTLE,  
HORSES, HOGS AND SHEEP, &c., &c.

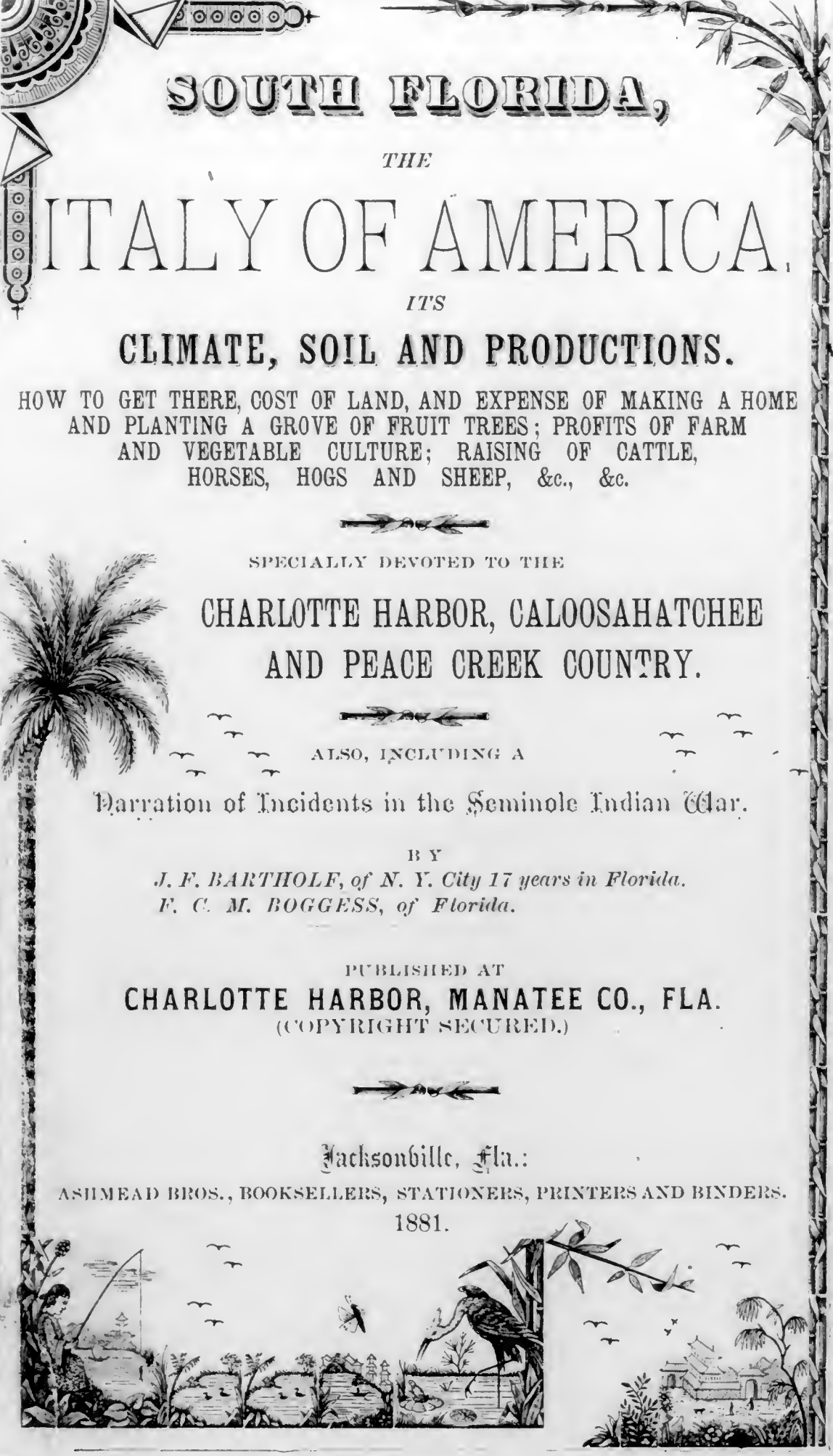
SPECIALLY DEVOTED TO THE  
**CHARLOTTE HARBOR, CALOOSAHATCHEE  
AND PEACE CREEK COUNTRY.**

ALSO, INCLUDING A  
Narration of Incidents in the Seminole Indian War.  
BY  
*J. F. BARTHOLF, of N. Y. City 17 years in Florida.*  
*F. C. M. BOGGESE, of Florida.*

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## PREFACE.

—o—

THE SUBSCRIBERS, authors of the contents of this pamphlet, present the same for the consideration of a generous public, hoping that the motives which have mainly induced us to the expenditure of time, labor, and money, will have a tendency to control harsh and unjust criticism upon the manner and style in which it is presented. We, neither of us lay claim to literary ability nor scholarly attainments, but we *do* claim that an extensive, varied, and continuous experience in South Florida, an intimate acquaintance with the soil and its productions, and all the different pursuits peculiar to this section, enables us to present facts for the consideration of those interested in Florida, which may be relied on as strictly true, according to our judgment, experience and belief.

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+  
E. J. ...  
We have both of us for many years been engaged gratuitously in endeavoring to satisfy the "greed" of the outside world as to the advantages of the section we claim to represent, and we have done this with no other motive in view; with no profit nor hope of gain, giving our noon-spells, and nights when others were asleep, to the great work of affording information to people abroad who sought homes in our life-giving climate, with a view to health and comfort, and the fact that we believed that we were engaged in a *good work*—one likely to benefit not only those who wished to come, but those already here—has been our only recompense; but we now find that through the increased interest that we have thus aided to excite, that we are utterly unable to supply, *directly* by letter, the numerous letters of inquiry constantly pouring in upon us.

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We have, therefore, prepared this little pamphlet, in which we have endeavored to embody all the information that the would-be new settler is likely to require, and we humbly trust that no one will be so unjust, so ungenerous, as to attribute to mercenary motives the price we put upon it. In estimating its *cost*, the *value* of the information it contains should be taken into consideration. It may be relied upon as strictly true in every respect. We of course wish to be paid for our labor, and make no claim to philanthropic nor benevolent motives in the matter. If there are any points upon which parties desire special information, not embraced in these pages, the subscribers will undertake to supply the same, making a reasonable charge for so doing.

All letters must contain ten three cent stamps, and be addressed to

BARTHOLF & BOGGESE,  
*Charlotte Harbor, Florida.*

REFERENCES.—Ex-Gov. Harrison Reed, Jacksonville, Fla.;  
Hon. Jas. T. Magbee, Ed. Guardian, Tampa, Fla.; Hon.  
F. A. Hendry, ex-Senator of Florida, Myers, Fla.

## CAUTION.

—o—

PERSONS VISITING FLORIDA with a view to locating, are hereby cautioned against the representations of interested, designing, or malicious parties, who, having a hidden object in view, do not hesitate to grossly misrepresent this section of country, and seek, by every means in their power, to deter the settler or traveler, whether with a view to location, recreation, or health, from reaching this section. Their object generally is a selfish one. They either have "land to sell," or wish their particular locality built up, in order to enhance the value of their property. Their desire is to "build themselves up by pulling others down;" and it has been this spirit of disgraceful prejudice and envy that has kept South Florida so long in the back-ground. As business men, engaged in a legitimate enterprise, we claim to have the interests of every one who visits us at heart, and will do our very best to please him. While we have to live, we want all others to live, and if at any time we realize our inability to further the interests of any of our patrons, we do not hesitate to tell them so. We fully realize the immense responsibility we assume in locating new-comers in a country where everything is wild and strange to them, and particularly in exerting ourselves to induce strangers to break loose from old ties and associations and seek a home here; but, realizing as we do, from *experience*, the great advantages which Florida possesses in many respects, we feel justified in exerting ourselves to the utmost to induce immigration.

The writer of this (Mr. J. F. Bartholf) is perfectly familiar with the Northern climate—being born in the city of New



York, and residing continuously there until the outbreak of the war, when he joined the Union forces, and, drifting along on the "tide of war," found himself at the close a captain of colored troops in Florida. This winter in Florida had endeared the climate to him, and, finding in it renewed health and vigor, he determined never again to endure the rigors of a Northern winter, and this resolution has been most steadily adhered to—he not having been out of the State since. In fact, apart from everything else, he found it necessary to remain in order to remove the stigma of "carpet-bagger," and which (somewhat reluctantly, however, it is feared) has given way to the general acceptance of an old settler. He knows that thousands in his native State would be far better off here, where no suffering need be apprehended from cold, and where the approach of winter creates no dread. How to reach here—how to enable these suffering thousands to make a home for themselves here at but little expense—is the object of this little book; and if through it we are instrumental in enabling those struggling against suffering and adversity to better their condition, we shall feel amply compensated.

## SOUTH FLORIDA:

ITS

## CLIMATE, SOIL AND PRODUCTIONS.

—o—

THE PORTION OF SOUTH FLORIDA to which we propose to give our especial attention comprises that section of country lying in Manatee county, bordering on Peace Creek as far north as Fort Meade, south to the Caloosahatchee River, west of range 24, and near latitude 27°, and embracing the islands and main-land lying in and adjacent to Charlotte Harbor. We thus specially designate the field of our labors, because a continuous residence of many years in its immediate vicinity, during which time we have been actively employed in all the pursuits common to this section, cow hunting backwards and forwards over all the area of country thus designated, enables us to speak from actual observation and experience.

The portion of country thus referred to, embracing about two thousand five hundred square miles, with the exception of the so-called "towns" of Pine Level, Fort Meade, Fort Ogden, and Hickory Bluff, is a vast unsettled wilderness, save here and there at intervals of from one to ten miles apart, squatters (mostly) on the public lands of the State, engaged in farming and stock-raising. Within the boundaries of this area are the following named bodies of water, to-wit: Charlotte Harbor, Peace Creek, emptying into it at Hickory Bluff; Prairie Creek, emptying into Peace Creek a few miles above its mouth, on the east side; the Myakka River, and the Caloosahatchee River. In addition, are a number of smaller

creeks lying adjacent to, or emptying into the above, but their depth of water is not sufficient to render them available for the navigation of vessels of any size. The greater portion of this land is supposed to be vacant, and subject to entry, either by direct purchase or under the provisions of the Homestead Act, which requires five years' residence to establish a claim to one hundred and sixty acres, at an expense of fourteen dollars, except in the case of Union soldiers, whose time in the service is placed to their credit, and deducted from the five years required from all others; so that a soldier of the last war who served for three years has but to occupy his homestead for two years to acquire a full title.

The land not subject to homestead entry can be bought in bodies of from forty acres upwards at from one dollar per acre to proportionably less, according to the amount taken up.

We say this land is "supposed" to be subject to entry, and know that until very recently it was so; but it is reported that the State has sold, to a Philadelphia company, four million acres of land in South Florida, and if such be the case, it is possible that some of the lands referred to may be included in said sale. Still, we are satisfied that even if such sale has been made, the purchase was made at such figures that the company will be able to offer greater inducements to actual settlers, in the price put upon the land and the opportunities offered for sale, than the State had done. Most of the territory referred to is a vast prairie country, interspersed with pine ridges, bay-heads, swamps and dense hammocks. These prairies are generally low, and, during what is known as the rainy season, are under water. A large portion of them are known to be very productive, and by necessary drainage to relieve them during the wet season, or cultivation at usually dry seasons of the year, particularly the winter months, could be made to yield immense crops of vegetables, rice, sugar cane, corn, Irish potatoes, &c.

They are now the grazing ground of vast herds of cattle,

which keep in good order the year round on the nutritious grasses which they afford. In addition, hogs are raised in large numbers; also, some sheep and horses, though the latter have not received much attention—the main, all-engrossing pursuit of the settlers being the raising of cattle and hogs.

Interspersed throughout this area of country are pine ridges, many of which extend for several miles, are high, dry desirable settlements, generally very healthy, and the soil of which is peculiarly adapted to the cultivation of all the semi-tropical and many of the tropical fruits. In addition, it can be made to yield, by proper cultivation, good crops of corn, cotton, rice, cane, vegetables, sweet and Irish potatoes, &c. The hammocks, bay heads, sour grasses and vast swamps, particularly those bordering on Peace Creek, are the richest lands in the world, and, by a judicious system of drainage, can be made to yield enormous crops, particularly of vegetables, rice, and sugar cane. The character of timber on the lands referred to is varied, and such as are peculiar to the locality. In the swamps and bay-heads are vast bodies of cypress of the largest description, oak, iron-wood, wahoo, sassafras, maple, holly, ash, &c.

On the ridges, pine timber of large size is to be found in immense bodies, many of the trees being from forty to sixty feet to the lower limbs.

In the hammocks, are found hickory, live-oak, water-oak, magnolia, bay, ash, cedar, &c. A great field here awaits the lumber and mill man, and the wonder is that Peace Creek and Charlotte Harbor is not "alive" with saw mills engaged in converting the timber, so conveniently situated upon its banks, into building material for home and foreign markets.

Now, having given this general description of the topography of the country referred to, and its natural growth, productions, &c., we will proceed to more definitely and particularly describe the localities embraced within the same at present attracting the greatest interest and attention, the



opportunities which they offer for investments, and the particular advantages which exist to attract those seeking a home in South Florida. To begin with:

#### PINE LEVEL,

The county-seat of Manatee county, located in township 37, range 23, about ten miles from the head of the present navigation on Peace Creek, and nearly in the centre of the county. This location was selected about 1867, the county-seat of the county prior to that date being Manatee, forty-five miles to the westward of Pine Level. The location is one of the finest that can be found in this section of country—being a large body of first-class pine land, every foot of which will make orange trees without fertilizers, and free from disease. Owing to the continuous agitation of the question of removal of the county-seat, the growth of Pine Level has not been as rapid as it otherwise would have been—in fact, until the last few years it had but three families residing at it; but the people having evidently come to the conclusion (and very sensibly, too) that Pine Level will remain a county-seat, or at least a great place of trade and importance, for all time to come, settlers have been pouring in there, saw mills have been established, many handsome dwelling and store houses have been erected, mail routes run in all directions, a court-house and jail built, and the cry is still “they come.” There is another and all-important reason why far-sighted men feel justified in making investments at Pine Level, and that is the fact that the railroad will not miss it *very far*, if at all, or, if disposed to pass it, with sufficient inducement, might come by and make Pine Level an important depot.

Both the Methodist and Baptist persuasions hold regular meetings at this place, and schools, both public and private, are maintained throughout the year. When we take into consideration the fact that Pine Level is the county-seat of a county whose tax returns and census show a greater ratio

of advancement than any other county in the State, and that the boundaries of the county extend for from fifty to one hundred miles in every direction, with a population, according to the last census (1880) of thirty-seven hundred persons, all told, whose assessed valuation of property amounts to (in 1880) six hundred and forty-seven thousand dollars, polling in the last election nearly seven hundred votes, and which has certainly been augmented by new-comers already to over one thousand, we can readily understand the opportunities which a location at Pine Level affords to the lawyer, the doctor, the merchant, hotel and boarding house-keeper (to say nothing of the mechanic and farmer, who have to provide for and take care of them all), in attending to the wants of the “swarms” of people whom legal or public business necessarily, more or less frequently, are compelled to visit the county-seat. And, yet, notwithstanding all this, and the opportunities thus afforded, this place, with its rapidly increasing population, has no resident physician, and but three lawyers, two of whom, holding lucrative county offices, are quite independent of practice, and the third is engaged in the publication of a weekly newspaper.

The fact of there being no physician located at Pine Level must not be taken as evidence that one is not needed; for, notwithstanding its general healthfulness, there is no question but what, in the attendance upon obstetrical cases, accidents, diseases of children, dental and surgical operations, as well as the treatment of the mild forms of intermittent and bilious fevers common to this section, a lucrative practice could be established by a physician of ability who could obtain the confidence of the people. Notwithstanding the business opportunities and advantages which this place affords, land can still be obtained at very low figures, and there are two or three improved places in the immediate vicinity of the court-house, with a few acres of land attached, that can be bought very low. Unimproved land within a mile or two—high, dry,

good pine land—can be bought for from five to twenty dollars per acre.

We will now take a look at

#### FORT OGDEN.

This place—or, more properly speaking, the settlement which claims the name—is situated on the east side of Peace Creek, about ten miles in a southerly direction from Pine Level, one mile from the river, and at the head of navigation. It is supposed to have been named after an officer of the United States army engaged in one of the Indian wars. It comprises a scattered "settlement," embracing a postoffice, two or more handsome stores, which are always well stocked with goods, sold as cheap as anywhere in the State; several frame dwellings, embowered in orange trees and surrounded with yards full of magnificent flowers and shade trees. Here are acres of orange trees, all doing well, and thousands of acres lying idle, awaiting for those who are coming, and that ere long, to thus avail themselves of the opportunity to acquire for themselves a competency for life. The character of the lands is mostly first-class pine land, interspersed with black jack, oak, &c. It is mostly very easily cleared, as the soil is very light and porous in its nature. No need of double and treble teams here to break up land, as a pony horse will do the work.

Situated as Fort Ogden is, in the heart of the great stock-growing country, and but a short distance from deep water navigation on Peace Creek, coupled with its general healthfulness and adaptability of soil and locality to the cultivation of fruits and vegetables, it must necessarily become a place of considerable importance, although we cannot but believe that could an equally desirable attractive locality be found immediately on the river, it would be found very advantageous to all parties. Still, taking into consideration the comparatively short distance intervening between the locality and the river, and the rapid increase of population, it

will not be long ere Fort Ogden reaches the river bank, at least, the point more specifically known by that name, and which will become the landing place by means of the light-draft steamers which will ere long ply the river. This place also has its school and church and saw mill, and is rapidly building up with a class of citizens that reflect credit upon any community. And, in connection with this matter, we would wish to correct an opinion that has become too prevalent concerning the moral status of Fort Ogden. Owing to the fact that, in days gone by, this place became the headquarters of a gang of cut-throats, it acquired a by-no-means enviable reputation, but, by the vigorous enforcement of the law, they have been forced to seek a more congenial locality, and since then there has been "quiet on the Potomac," with the exception of an occasional personal difference, which has unfortunately, in one or two instances in the last half dozen years, resulted fatally. Suffice it, however, for us to say, that such violations of law meet the disapproval of the great mass of the people, and the perpetrators are held strictly accountable for the laws they violate.

We will now jump into our boat and proceed down Peace Creek to the next point of interest, to-wit:

#### CHARLOTTE HARBOR.

And as we pass along, having nothing more to do at this season of the year than to keep our small craft properly steered, owing to the swift-flowing current, we will take a glimpse of the lands lying along the banks of this beautiful so-called "creek," but in reality a good sized river, varying in width from, at its mouth of three miles, to one-fourth of a mile, and affording six feet of water to the point known as Hunter's Creek, the place of delivery for all freights for the country lying east of Peace Creek. For miles nothing but the dense growth of the swamp with which the river is bordered on both sides meets the eye, but at intervals along are



pine openings, affording desirable settlements immediately on the river bank, with deep water transportation, right as it were, at its very door. The scenery is grand and picturesque in the extreme, and as we glide along in the twilight of a summer's evening, enveloped in the shadows which extend from the overhanging foliage of the swamp on either side, with no sound to disturb the stillness, which reigns supreme, except the splash of a fish, or the roar of an alligator, we cannot help feeling impressed with the majesty of nature, which here reigns supreme. These swamps abound in grapes, growing wild and in great profusion, berries of various kinds, what is known here as the hog plum, and a variety of other natural productions, some of which very nutritious and agreeable to the taste. We must not forget to mention cabbage palmetto, than which a better substitute for genuine cabbage could not be found, though no ways similar in taste. It has been known to sustain life and afford food to families for "weeks at a stretch." It is found here in great abundance. With the exception of the rainy season, the lands of these vast swamps are adapted to cultivation, and at no distant day will be converted into gardens, rice and cane plantations. As we approach the mouth of the creek, or river, it gradually widens, until we finally come in sight of its outlet, to-wit, Charlotte Harbor, and the principal settlement immediately on its shores, to-wit:

#### HICKORY BLUFF.

This place is located on a ridge of pine, scrub and light hammock growth, extending about four miles immediately on the water, and is characterized for its healthfulness, entire absence of malarial, or other local cause for disease, adaptability of soil to the culture of the semi-tropical and many of the tropical fruits; also, for farming and gardening purposes. It is the head of deep water navigation, the depth of water being about twelve feet, and, being a land-locked harbor,

is safe from the disagreeable and injurious effects of a more exposed situation, which operates very materially in its favor as a locality for the cultivation of the orange and other trees of the citrus family, which, by reason of their thorny nature, need a protected location. It must not be inferred that the wind does not blow hard here sometimes; but where does it not? And we say thank God for it and its life-giving influence, bringing to us, as it does, the flavor of Old Ocean, away down the bay, twenty miles from our shores, and dispelling every taint of miasma or debilitating influence that lurks in the surrounding atmosphere.

The settlement of Hickory Bluff comprises about one dozen families, its store, postoffice, church, and school house. There are several new and handsome private residences, which would reflect credit upon any locality. In addition, is an extensive cattle wharf, from which load after load of fine beef cattle is annually shipped to Cuba.

As a resort for invalids, and pleasure-seekers who are content with *natural* pleasure—such as the vast forest prairies, and vast expanse of water teeming with fish, oysters and turtle; birds of all kinds and descriptions; clams, the finest kind; and the attractions of natural scenery, the most gorgeous sunset and moonlight views on the water—a residence at Hickory Bluff cannot be excelled by any other point in South Florida.

We venture the assertion, and defy contradiction, that a man who is fond of hunting, fishing and boating, with the aid of a cast net and a gun and a small boat, can live better at this place than do many of the epicures of our great hotels, who pay for their accommodations from two to four dollars per day. We admit, of course, that it is not every one who possesses the necessary skill to hunt successfully, and that moreover there is considerable labor and fatigue involved in a tramp through the woods in search of game, or a trip down the bay in search of oysters and clams; and we do not want

any one to think for a moment that all these things are lying right at our doors, to be picked up. No; they must be gone after, and necessarily involve a little expenditure of time, and perhaps fatigue; but judicious management almost invariably secures an abundant supply of game. As for fish, they are caught here at all times of the year, in one way and another—with the cast net, "grains," or "gig," and hook and line—mullet, sheep-head, red fish, tarpaun, trout, and many other species. About October, the mullet run past in great "schools," and can be caught in any desired quantity. They are then generally full "roed," and are very delicious, fully equal to the shad of Northern waters.

This locality is further specially distinguished for its exemption from injurious cold. During the writer's acquaintance with it, extending through many years, no serious damage has been done to even the tenderest vegetation, and orange trees have not been at all injured. The large body of water upon which it is situated tempers the cold to such an extent that cold loses its injurious effect, and particularly does this apply to the south bank of the bay at this point, as we know, from personal observation, on an occasion of unusual cold, when vegetation was "nipped" at Hickory Bluff, having occasion to visit the only settlement across the bay (about three miles), the most delicate *vegetables were uninjured*.

What a field is thus opened up to those who desire to engage in vegetable culture! Thousands of acres of land thus specially adapted by nature, subject to homestead entry at a pleasant, healthful locality, where all the advantages of trade and transportation can be afforded, only awaiting the men whose energy, industry and skill will convert this now "howling wilderness" into one vast garden to supply the wants of the "snowed up" people of the North.

The land comprised in the settlement of Hickory Bluff is owned by private parties, but could be bought in lots to suit purchasers, on very reasonable terms. Within a few

miles of the locality are thousands of acres of land, equally as good, that are subject to homestead entry, or purchase from the State. Nowhere in the known world do investments in lands promise more favorably than at this point. Railroads are gradually working their way down from the upper portion of the State, with a view to a terminus on Charlotte Harbor, and the routes, so far as known, are supposed to indicate the immediate vicinity of Hickory Bluff.

One or more of those roads will certainly be run through, and that ere long. The interests of the people demand it, the interests of the railroad company *demand it*, and it will come; and at its terminus on the waters of Charlotte Harbor it will connect with a line of steamers, conveying the passengers and freight of the North to extreme Southern ports, and *vice versa*. What a glorious future does this open up to the whole of South Florida, and more particularly the vicinity of Charlotte Harbor and the line of the proposed road; four days to New York—lightning express conveying fruit and vegetables to the far-off frozen regions of the North without danger of decay!

Should any one be skeptical on the subject of a railroad, and deem us too sanguine, we would say: "Well, we are not 'hide-bound' on the subject. We can get along without a railroad here on the water, and make a steamer answer our purposes just as well, or at least nearly so. We are within twenty-four hours run of Cedar Keys, which enables us to reach New York in six days (perhaps, by special arrangement, in five,) and for the purpose of shipment in the winter months, when vegetables and fruit are not subject to decay, this is all that is sufficient." *But* we think we hear some one say, "You have not got that steamer." And we answer: "No; not right now, but when the men of the North and West, toiling 'mid snow and ice six months in the year for a scanty existence, with all the horrors of *starvation* and *freezing to death* staring them in the face, find out what a desirable place



this is to live—how they can live out of doors the year round—where clothing is almost a superfluity, and fashions are unknown—where the earth, the air and the waters are alive with the means of subsistence—where they can, if disposed to exert themselves by a judicious application of their time, soon acquire a competency, and, more than all, have *good health*, and moreover find that this section is not as they have been lead to believe, where a white man could not live—they will flock here in such numbers that men who own steamers will gladly run them in their interest. And, in the meantime, we will get along with our schooners and such aid as the little steamer 'Spitfire,' plying to Punta Rassa—at which point the gulf steamers are in the habit of stopping—affords us."

We will now endeavor to give a brief description of

#### CHARLOTTE HARBOR.

This magnificent body of water, extending from Hickory Bluff and Peace Creek on the north, to Punta Rassa and the Caloosahatchee River on the south, is about forty miles long and some twenty in width. Emptying into it, particularly from the eastern portion, are numerous creeks, some of them extending many miles into the interior or mainland. Among the most important of these is Halpatahatchee, or Alligator Creek, which is noted for the superior quality of hammock land lying along its banks. There are but few settlers in this vicinity, but they are well pleased with their location, and are realizing great returns from their outlay of time and labor in the cultivation of the soil, raising cattle, &c. There is another "Alligator" Creek on the north, which offers great inducements to settlers, in the attractions and advantages of location, character of soil, good range, &c. Interspersed throughout Charlotte Harbor are a number of islands, varying in extent from ten acres to thousands. These islands, with the exception of one, and it the largest—known

as *Pine Island*—are covered with a dense growth of cabbage palmetto, oak, hickory and mangrove. The undergrowth consists of native grasses, weeds, vines, and a species of plum, known here as the *cocoa plum*, which grows in immense quantities here, and is much appreciated for its fine flavor, being considered by some far superior to the cultivated variety.

The land is generally very productive, and the few settlers of these islands raise enormous crops of vegetables off very small tracts of land, without the aid of fertilizers of any sort, and which find ready sale at fair prices.

The waters of Charlotte Harbor teem with fish of every description, more especially the mullet, which, during the fall months—the "schooling" season—are caught in immense numbers by Spanish "ranchos," or fishermen, who, notwithstanding all law to the contrary, annually establish themselves on the islands of Charlotte Harbor, and, operating with great seines, catch, salt and cure fish, which are sent by the schooner load to Cuba; affording but another instance of the neglect on the part of the government to properly protect our home industries and sources of revenue. We pay to Great Britain five million dollars for the privilege of fishing on the shores of New Foundland, and then when American fishermen attempt to avail themselves of the privilege thus so dearly paid for, they are opposed with violence; but foreigners are permitted to come to our shores and engage in the fishing business, and that in the most wasteful, extravagant manner, calculated to entirely destroy the fish, without affording any revenue to the government whatever. How harsh and unjust seems the operations of our laws, and how much do they operate in favor of all but the poor farmer and tiller of the soil!

By judicious management, the products of the water—its fish, sponge, oysters, clams, &c.—could be made to aid materially in the expenses of maintenance of a good government;

but instead of that it is the toiler on land that has to foot the bill.

It must not be inferred, from all this, that the supply of fish is at all diminished; on the contrary, it is maintained by some that there are more than ever. We have passed through "schools" of them where they were so dense that it was utterly impossible to row a boat. A great opening here awaits men of experience and sufficient capital, in the putting up of these fish for the Northern and foreign markets. They are very easily cured, and, when "dressed," will average about one pound each. In addition to this species of fishing, the catching of live fish for the Cuban market is also carried on very extensively. These fish (groupers) are caught with hook and line, and conveyed in fast-sailing smacks, having immense "wells" of water constructed in them, alive to Cuba, making the run frequently in thirty-six hours, although they are generally a week or more in making up a load. The fish usually stand the trip remarkably well, apparently being in as good condition on their arrival in Cuba as when first caught. It is quite an interesting spectacle to look into one of these wells, and particularly to notice how gentle these fish become in a short time. Of course they have to be fed, and they seem to know when "feed" time comes as well as we do, as at such times they will crowd to the surface, ready to seize the food offered them.

Throughout Charlotte Harbor are miles of oyster beds and clam bars, free to all to come and gather; no pre-emptions here on this species of food, nor, in fact, on anything which the waters afford, including turtle—both green and loggerhead—which are very numerous, and the eggs of which line the outer beach of many of these islands during the laying season. Quite a business is also carried on in the conveyance of turtle and eggs to Key West and Cuba. Birds of all kinds and descriptions peculiar to this latitude are found in immense numbers, and on some of the islands of Charlotte

Harbor are "rookeries," where thousands of them congregate to lay their eggs and hatch. At such places, you "bog" at every step in beds of guano, or "bird lime," far surpassing in fertilizing power, many of the commercial manures offered for sale.

Notwithstanding the State law to the contrary, these birds are continually hunted, and killed in large numbers, for their plumage, used as objects of interest to people abroad, or to decorate the bonnets of ladies of fashion. A considerable business is also done in the saving of birds' eggs, which, denuded of their contents, are cured and preserved as objects of curiosity, by reason of their color, shape or size. The gathering of shells on the outer beach of the islands has also been found very profitable, as some magnificent specimens are found.

We must not forget to mention the alligator, found in these waters in large numbers, and sometimes of enormous size. A profitable business is carried on by parties engaged in hunting them for their teeth (the finest of ivory,) skins, musk and oil. In fact, this repulsive animal, heretofore considered worthless, has suddenly become so valuable that it is a question if the present inducements are held out, if it cannot be made a profitable business to raise them for market. The idea seems absurd, but when we take into consideration the fact of their easy propagation, rapid and hardy growth, and the prices that are realized for what they afford, it is not so absurd after all.

On some of the islands of Charlotte Harbor are found evidences of habitation by a race of people in days long gone by, of whom the present generation knows nothing, and history affords no clue. Here are remains of embankments of earth and shell, which indicate great care and skill in their construction, and so extensive that the conclusion is inevitably arrived at that the work must have been done by a numerous and intelligent people.



Those interested in ancient history will here find abundant field for study and investigation. These islands are supposed to have been, in days gone by, the rendezvous of Spanish buccaneers, or pirates, and it is barely possible these works may have been erected by them, though very doubtful, as everything seems to indicate them to be much older. An impression, somehow, has got abroad that there is a large amount of buried treasure on some of these islands, and searches have repeatedly been made for it in vain by various parties.

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We will now endeavor to refer specifically to the various matters upon which a new settler naturally seeks information, and not embraced in the foregoing general description, commencing with the

#### CLIMATE, TEMPERATURE, AND SEASONS.

Beginning with January, it gradually gets warmer, until July, when the average temperature is about 90°. It is rare, rare indeed, that it gets to 96°. The balance of the year the heat gradually diminishes, until, in what is known as our "winter" months, it is probably about 60° on an average, though this is guess work, no regular record having been kept. But suffice it to say that it never gets so hot in summer that any man accustomed to exposure North or South can do ordinary farm work, and that, too, without any danger of *sun-stroke*, cases of which are very rare indeed. In the hottest days of summer, the heat is tempered by the cooling breezes of the Gulf of Mexico, and the nights are invariably cool enough for refreshing slumber, frequently rendering a light covering necessary.

During the so-called "winter" months, the temperature occasionally is quite variable—sudden changes taking place which create some discomfort for a short time—but, as a general thing, the days are spring-like, and coats and fires superfluous. During the early part of the year—say until the 1st

of April—considerable rain falls, sufficient to enable the farmer to plant and "make" his corn, peas, sweet potatoes, and other crops, and helping along the sugar cane and vegetables. There is but little rain until July, when the rainy season sets in, and then every day or two there are heavy falls of rain, which cools the earth and air, promotes vegetation, and enables the farmer to plant sweet potatoes and rice to any desired extent. Persons not interested in the cultivation of the soil consider this the most disagreeable time of the year, as owing to the character of the country (being mostly low,) travel is rendered difficult, by reason of their being so much water on the ground; but those who *are* interested appreciate the rain, and know how beneficial it is.

About the last of September, the rainy season ends, and from then until January are only occasional showers—enough to "keep things a-growing."

As regards cold, amounting to even frost, instances of its injurious effects are extremely rare. We do not mean to say that we never have any, for our intention is to give, according to our judgment, experience, and belief, a truthful description of everything as it really is; but what we do mean to say is that the instances are very rare, and under such circumstances that when "frost" does happen, that with a little precaution in the way of building of smokes, or a light covering of brush, little or no damage is inflicted, not even to the tenderest of vegetables, while orange, lemon, lime and other trees are never hurt at all. To those who have become tired of the rigors of the Northern winters, and particularly to those whose health suffers thereby, South Florida offers an asylum whose geniality and gratefulness of climate is unsurpassed. We will now consider the advantages of this locality with a view to

#### HEALTHFULNESS.

Upon this point, we cannot do better than to introduce an

extract from the report of the Hon. Dennis Eagan, late Commissioner of Lands and Immigration, as follows:

The healthfulness of Florida is one of its chief characteristics, and its sanative influences are so well recognized that it has become of late years a kind of asylum for invalids from all parts of the country. Nowhere in the State do we meet, among the native population, or those who have resided in the State for a length of time, those violent forms of disease which are met with in all the other States. It is true we see the consumptive, the rheumatic, the dyspeptic, and the debilitated, but in almost every instance they are strangers to the soil, and have sought the State to bask in its sunshine, and drink in the life-giving influences with which its air is laden. Of course in a country exhibiting such an exuberance of vegetation as Florida, and where the breath of winter is scarcely felt, the presence of malaria is to be expected; but the diseases arising from malarial influences are limited to the very mildest forms of fevers and bilious complaints. There are no such uncomfortable and dangerous symptoms of malarial poisoning met with in Florida as manifest themselves in various parts of the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois and Indiana. Bilious fever of a remittent character is prevalent, but it yields readily to proper treatment. Intermittent fever is also common, but it is rarely attended with dangerous results, as the mode of treatment is well understood. In any case, the incoming settler may rely upon it that he is no more liable to suffer from fever in Florida than in any other section of the country.

For consumptives, or those suffering from chronic disorders of the mucous membranes, whether of the air passages or of the digestive organs, Florida presents an asylum such as no other part of the United States can furnish. There is not a case in which a warm, moist air is needed to soothe and quiet the lungs and throat, in which the climate of the State will not prove a specific. And in nine-tenths of the cases this is what is demanded. Here are vast forests of pines, breathing forth their balm till the whole air is fragrant with it, and if there is a possibility of relief for the unfortunate victim of consumption, this, in conjunction with the genial sunshine and soft, balmy atmosphere, will effect it. Any amount of testimony could be given as to the curative effects of the climate here on consumptives. There are thousands of individuals throughout the State enjoying excellent health and the prospect of long lives, who were the most undoubted victims of the disease, and who would have been in their graves, had they not changed

their Northern homes for homes in the State. Of course there are a great many who come only to find their graves. They have lingered at the North until the disease has fastened itself upon their vitals beyond the possibility of recovery. Their skeleton forms may be seen every day. They come to the State expecting the climate to work a miracle upon them—a miracle no less stupendous than life from the dead. To such we have only a few words to say—stay at home.

A medical gentleman, writing on Florida as a place for consumptives, says—

“One chief object in spending a winter in Florida is this: A man with chronic disease should be satisfied if, during the winter, he merely keeps his enemy at bay. He is content if his disease—his enemy—makes no progress then, while during the spring and summer he tries to get well. In this the climate of Florida helps him. It is the best place in which an invalid can put his disease into winter quarters previous to undertaking the summer campaign. And if his life is to be a constant retreat—a running fight with and from Death—this is a strong fortress into which he may retire, and from which he may often set his enemy at defiance.”

The same writer says further—

“There is danger, however, in this balmy climate—you may feel too well, and, again forgetting the almanac, come home too soon. And here is the true reason why so many are rather injured than benefitted by a winter in Florida—they come home too soon. One really becomes confused about the seasons; summer and winter are so jumbled together that, between the almanac and the weather, you are completely puzzled. You date your letters ‘January,’ and yet you are sitting by an open window without a fire, and feel as though May-day had come. You have had so long a spring that you think it must surely be mid-summer. Feeling well, you start homeward, and find at your journey’s end that you have left May behind you and gotten into February. Your frame, rendered more susceptible to cold by the winter’s warmth which you have been enjoying, is easily affected, and you suffer by the change, and suffer severely.

“Go to Florida as fast as you choose, but if you value life come away slowly. It is a dangerous land to leave. Feel your way home, judge by your sensations, and journey accordingly. Go to Savannah, then to Charleston, then to Aiken (by the way, this place is often a fine cure for rheumatism, and therefore does not deserve its name,) there halt, and read the papers to learn whether there has been snow in Boston. If there has been, wait until it melts and the bluebirds begin to sing, then proceed



leisurely, and let June find you in Philadelphia. A better plan, perhaps, would be to follow the strawberries. In early April you will find them abundant in Tallahassee. March with the ripening, and come slowly North, eating as you go. No fruit is better for an invalid, and although God could assuredly make a better berry, yet he certainly never did. Travelers—invalids especially—should have an almanac of leaves, flowers and fruits as guides and regulators of temperature."

The climate of the State is also well adapted for the cure of rheumatism—in fact, it may be regarded as a specific for this disease. It keeps the patient in a perpetual perspiration. The skin is thus rendered active and the pains lessened. Again, the fibrine in the blood is diminished, and all the secretions of all the organs of the body are increased. Add to these influences bathing in the tepid sulphur springs, and the cure is complete.

We will conclude this topic with the following remarks, taken from the report of Surgeon-General Lawson, made some years ago. He says—

"Indeed, the statistics in this bureau demonstrate the fact that the diseases which result from malaria are a much milder type in the peninsula of Florida than in any other State in the Union. These records show that the ratio of deaths to the number of cases of remittent fever has been much less than among the troops serving in any other portion of the United States. In the Middle Division of the United States the proportion is one death to thirty-six cases of remittent fever, in the Northern Division one to fifty-two, in the Southern Division one to fifty-four, in Texas one to seventy-eight, in California one to one hundred and twenty-two, in New Mexico one to one hundred and forty-eight, while in Florida it is but ONE TO TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SEVEN.

"The general healthfulness of many parts of Florida, particularly on its coast, is proverbial. The average annual mortality of the whole peninsula, from returns in this office, is found to be 2.06 per cent., while in the other portions of the United States (previous to the war with Mexico) it is 3.05 per cent.

"In short, it may be asserted, without fear of refutation, that Florida possesses a much more agreeable and salubrious climate than any other State or Territory in the Union."

We will simply add to the foregoing by saying that even the mild forms of bilious and intermittent fevers referred to

are not known on the lands bordering on Hickory Bluff and Charlotte Harbor.

#### DRINKING WATER.

Well water is generally used, and this, with the exception of localities where lime rock is found, is usually cool, pleasant and healthful. Many persons, however, prefer cistern water, knowing it to be the purest possible to obtain, and, as the cost of a wooden cistern is so small, they are used by quite a number of the settlers who want to be on the "safe" side and avoid every possible cause of disease.

During the rainy season, cistern water is preferable to well water, as the latter, by reason of excessive rain-fall, is not so clear and cool as usual; but, during the balance of the year, it is usually found to be as stated.

#### INSECTS, REPTILES, GAME, ETC.

Florida has suffered in the estimation of people abroad by reason of the fact that the impression has prevailed that insects, &c., were so numerous as to make a home here exceedingly disagreeable, if not positively dangerous to life itself; and while it is not disputed that in the early settlements of the State great hardships were experienced in this respect, still it must be borne in mind that in Florida, as all other States, these annoyances rapidly disappear before the march of civilization, and as settlements are made and new lands open up, mosquitoes, sand-flies, gnats, snakes, &c., gradually disappear—are exterminated—or, like the tramp, "move on" to where they are not molested. It is not denied that new settlers, locating in the "woods," are apt to be annoyed with mosquitoes at the outset; but the experience of all has been that they become less and less troublesome as land is cleared up and improvements made. More particularly does this apply to the vicinity of the water-courses. In the interior they are not apt to be so bad. They never are annoying

during the day. It has been found that the best way to control them, next to a good "bar," is a *good house*, properly weather-boarded and ceiled, with good doors and sash windows. From this they can be easily excluded, and, with the aid of wire screens to the doors and windows, all desired air can be admitted. As for snakes, scorpions, lizards, &c., "they are few and far between"—in fact, so much so that in many localities they would be considered quite a curiosity. The frequent burning of the woods tends to destroy them. Of wild animals, such as bear, panther, wild-cat, &c., it may be said that there is not sufficient number to occasion any fears. They are to be found, of course, in the thickest of the swamps and hammocks, and afford the sportsman fine sport in hunting them. Deer, turkeys, quail, rabbits, squirrels, and birds of every description, are numerous, as also the raccoon, opossum, &c., and only require the necessary skill to hunt and find them in any desired quantity. Some families get their entire supplies of meat by hunting, while the sale of the skins helps to purchase other necessities.

#### PRODUCTIONS OF THE SOIL, FIELD CROPS, ETC.

Throughout the area of country embraced in this article, the settlers raise more or less of the following named crops, to-wit: Corn, rice, sugar-cane, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, and vegetables of all kinds.

The land, properly prepared and cultivated, yields—of corn, about on an average, twelve bushels to the acre; rice, forty bushels; sugar, ten barrels; sweet potatoes, two hundred bushels, and about the same of Irish potatoes. Garden vegetables of all kinds can be raised in great abundance—in fact, owing to the mildness of the climate, a continued succession of crops can be maintained the year through, and, by a judicious rotation, with great benefit to the land. For instance, corn is planted in January with peas and watermelons, all of which is made and out of the way in time to plant the

land in sweet potatoes in July, which is the principal potato-planting month in the year, mainly because there is usually more rain during that month. They can be planted any month in the year, and are allowed to remain in the ground and keep growing, sometimes growing to a very large size, weighing as much as twelve and fifteen pounds.

Cotton is not planted to any extent, not but what it will grow well, but it is not "king" here, as elsewhere, and the women folks find it more profitable to raise poultry for the purpose of purchasing their cloth than by the old-fashioned method of cultivating cotton, spinning and weaving. Owing to the fact that stock-raising is the principal pursuit of the people, and to other circumstances, which will be referred to elsewhere, the cultivation of the soil with a view to farm products has been rather a secondary consideration throughout the section of country referred to. As a consequence, fields exceeding ten acres in extent are the exception, and not the rule. Off these, however, the settler, with what he derives from the sale of his beef and hogs, manages to live. In addition, the land is usually planted in orange or other fruit trees, whose growth is hastened by the crops cultivated amongst them; so that the settler constantly has before him the evidence of an assured competency, in the growth of his trees, to encourage him cheerfully to bear with what might otherwise be considered hardships and inconveniences.

#### MARKETS, TRANSPORTATION, ETC.

It will readily be perceived, from what has been stated, that no great effort is made to raise anything for market in this section, except live stock, which, driven to the shipping points of Hickory Bluff and Punta Rassa, are transferred to steamers and sail vessels and carried to Cuba and Key West. At present no man ever has any difficulty in disposing of his produce, and especially vegetables, at the nearest store, and at very satisfactory prices. As a natural consequence, were



the business gone into extensively, and on a large scale, some special arrangements would have to be made; but there is no question but what, whenever that is done, there will be abundant transportation. Until very recently a steamer has been plying between Fort Ogden, Hickory Bluff and Punta Rassa, carrying freights and passengers and connecting with the Gulf steamers for Cedar Keys and Key West at Punta Rassa. A large schooner runs direct to New Orleans, making trips as fast as wind and weather will permit. Another schooner is running direct to Cedar Keys. Two smaller vessels are engaged in carrying a semi-weekly mail to Punta Rassa. In addition, are other sail vessels, engaged in the cattle trade and conveying produce to Key West, which is undeniably, AT TIMES, one of the best markets in the world, produce having, during the present year—and it is the case every year at *certain times*—having been known to bring as follows:

Sweet potatoes . . . . .	\$ 2 40 per bushel.
Eggs . . . . .	37 per dozen.
Chickens . . . . .	10 00 per dozen.

There is no question but that a man familiar with the Key West market, by *watching* his *chances*, can realize *good prices* for all he can raise, though as a *general thing* not more than one-third of the above prices can be relied upon.

There is a movement now on foot to, with the aid of the Congressional appropriation of \$7,000, remove the obstructions in Peace Creek, and thus enable a light draught steamer to reach the upper settlements on that river, conveying to them their freights and carrying off their produce. This steamer, connecting with larger ones at Hickory Bluff or Boca Grande (the entrance to Charlotte Harbor,) will afford to this section *abundant, cheap and rapid* transportation. Whenever this is done, the business of vegetable culture will assume gigantic proportions in this locality, so well adapted

by nature for that pursuit, and the value of lands and property will be greatly enhanced. *And now, as we go to press, we hear that a strong movement to bring this about is taking place.*

#### HOW TO GET HERE—EXPENSE OF TRAVEL, ETC.

In order to reach this section, the best and quickest route is to Cedar Keys, from thence by steamer to Punta Rassa, and from there here, by small steamer, which will make weekly trips; or, should parties fail to connect at that place (Punta Rassa), and wish to come on without delay, they can find conveyance by the sail vessels carrying the United States mail semi-weekly through Charlotte Harbor to Hickory Bluff up Peace Creek and the Caloosahatchee River. The run is generally made in a few hours, and is a very pleasant trip through the islands and waters of Charlotte Harbor, which, at certain seasons of the year, are literally "alive" with fish. Cost of passage by steamer to Punta Rassa, eight dollars; from Punta Rassa to Peace Creek, one dollar. Another and more *direct* route would be by schooner from Cedar Keys, making frequent trips, at a charge of about *six dollars* for passage. The cabin accommodations are not very extensive, but the vessel is a good, staunch, fast-sailing craft, well manned by active, gentlemanly, experienced seamen, who are renowned for their quick trips, reasonable charges and courteous treatment to passengers. There is no doubt but what if more extensive accommodations were required, arrangements could easily be made with Captain H. Roan, of schooner "Express," to furnish it to any desired extent, and on the most reasonable terms, by communicating with him in advance at Charlotte Harbor P. O. Parties from the West could reach here from New Orleans by schooner "Emma White," Captain Collier, which makes trips about once a month. The vessel is a staunch fast-sailing craft, and has for a captain one of the most experienced seamen on the Gulf

coast. She has good cabin accommodations for a dozen or more passengers, at *very reasonable rates*.

#### BUILDING MATERIAL, WAGES, LABOR, ETC.

There are three saw-mills in operation in the section of country referred to, turning out very good pine lumber at twelve dollars per thousand. Shingles are generally got out of the vast cypress swamps bordering Peace Creek, and cost about three dollars per thousand. The cost of lumber can be reduced one-half by cutting and delivering the logs at the mill, which is generally done. There are no sash, door, blind or other factories here, and everything of that kind, and all other necessities for finishing off buildings, have to be brought from abroad. That there is an opening here for a factory of this description there is no doubt; also, for the manufacture of furniture. Until the introduction of saw-mills into the country, people lived in log houses, built, some of them, in very *primitive* style; but with the introduction of saw-mills, these relics of frontier life are disappearing, and their places are being taken with *neat, substantial* cottage houses, in which, as a matter of course, the old home-made "bunks," chairs and tables which were formerly used, and were considered "good enough" for a *log house*, are thrown aside and replaced with those of a more *ornamental*, if not equally *substantial* character. Brick chimneys are also getting in demand. A kind of an old "stick and clay" daub was considered good enough for a log house, but no sensible man would think of such a thing as putting one up to a neat frame dwelling. Clay is found here in spots, abundant and good, and experiments have determined the fact that good bricks can be made, not only of it, but also of lime and sand, which, made into *concrete*, is found very durable. Immense banks of shell are found on the shores of Charlotte Harbor, and which makes lime of good quality. Buildings erected of this material have been found very satisfactory in every respect, both

as a matter of *economy, durability and comfort*; cooler in summer and warmer in winter, and requiring but little mechanical skill in their erection.

As a natural result of this spirit of improvement, skilled labor is coming into demand, and this demand is sure to increase as the country builds up, which it is doing *very fast*. At present wages vary all the way from seventy-five cents to two dollars per day and board. There is no fixed rate; the idea seems to be with the employer to hire as cheap as he can, and with the employe to get as much as he can, and if he can't get as much as he wants to take less.

It is such an easy country to live in—nature affords so much, and all the necessities of life are so cheap—that it is not to be wondered at if laborers are somewhat independent, or, what some would say, unreliable.

Fashion not having assumed full control of the people, the expense of wearing apparel is not great. For a man, a couple pairs of shoes (brogans, generally,) at one dollar and fifty cents per pair; two or three pairs of cotton pants, at about twenty-five cents per yard; three or four shirts, and a hat or two, constitutes a year's outfit, costing about fifteen dollars. Then comes the inevitable pipe, tobacco and pocket-knife, which cost about as much more with a great many whose extravagances generally find vent in this direction. Recently, at church and on public occasions, it has become customary to wear a *coat*, and some of our piny woods "crackers" even venture so far at times as to adorn themselves with vests, collars and *neckties*; but there is no *absolute necessity* for all this display. A man is at liberty to dress as he pleases, so long as he observes common decency, and is thought none the less of because he don't care to imitate the manners and appearance of others. Board throughout the country is very cheap—as low as five dollars per month—plain and substantial—and to keep house it can be made to cost still less, especially if a number are associated together.



Under all these circumstances, and more especially because of the fact that it costs so little for a man to have a *home of his own*, where he can make a living by farming, stock-raising and hunting and fishing, it is not surprising if labor is *scarce* and hard to control. A man comes into the country in search of work; knocks around awhile; soon sees a chance for independence and freedom from an employer; settles down; makes him a place; gets a start of hogs—perhaps cattle, if able, or, if not, as soon as he can, starts a grove—works out when obliged to, and soon makes himself comfortable for life. Any man who is disposed to make the effort can easily do all this here on a very small capital. Most of the laboring classes are white (Americans). There are but few foreigners and negroes. Of the latter, in the entire county of Manatee, with its nine hundred and odd voters, there are but about *thirty colored*. This is probably attributable to the fact that but little cotton is raised in this section, and the colored race doubtless prefer to remain where it is made more of a specialty of. There is no doubt but what the supply of labor falls very far short of the demand, and men who are able and anxious to employ help are frequently unable to do so—that is, reliable help that will work faithfully and seek to promote the interests of their employers. We, therefore, often see men not very well able to work engaged in the performance of *necessary labor*, because not able to get hands, while also work they would have done is neglected for the same cause.

Of female help there is a still greater scarcity than of the male. The “Biddy” of our large cities has not as yet penetrated into this remote region. What there is are all native and to the manner born—generally unmarried elderly ladies, or the daughters of parents in poor circumstances, who have to “work out” to help themselves and the old folks, and for which they are thought none the less of by those who employ them, or any one else; in fact, in this respect, both with regard to female and male help in all the different branches

of industry, the fact of being *employed* here carries with it no degradation nor disgrace. The rights and feelings of the employe are respected, and if he *behaves himself*, he is considered as “one of the family”—takes his or her place at the table with all others, excepting, in all cases, colored laborers, who know their place and keep it.

#### COST OF MAKING A PLACE, STARTING A GROVE, ETC.

This can be made to vary according to circumstances and the ability of the settler, and depends on whether he secures a homestead or buys his land. Supposing the latter, and calculating upon a field say of ten acres, we will make our calculations as follows:

Forty acres of land at \$1 00 . . . . .	\$ 40 00
Expense of <i>securing</i> title, etc. . . . .	5 00
Clearing and fencing. This item is governed considerably by circumstances and the location selected, as, in places where the land is open and easily cleared, with good rail timber accessible, it is very low compared to localities that do not possess those advantages; but, basing our estimate upon a fairly advantageous location, we would say the expense of clearing and fencing ten acres would be.	150 00
Dwelling and out-houses. This again depends on means and tastes of the settler. If content with a log house, the cost is small compared with a frame dwelling; but supposing he wants a plain cottage of four rooms, with out-houses of logs, the expense might be roughly estimated at . . .	250 00
One thousand year-old orange trees . . . . .	50 00
Labor setting out trees . . . . .	10 00
Sundry incidental expenses attendant settlement—clearing up land, hauling, digging well, etc., etc. .	50 00
Making total cost . . . . .	\$ 555 00

This estimate is made on the supposition that no labor is done by the settler whatever, but that everything is paid for *in cash*. In the event of the settler doing his *own work*, let us see what the unavoidable cash outlay would amount to:

Land, and expense of entry . . . . .	\$. 45 00
Eight thousand feet of lumber . . . . .	100 00
Nails, sash, etc. . . . .	30 00
Orange trees . . . . .	50 00
Total amount . . . . .	\$. 225 00

This estimate is based upon the supposition that the settler has his own team for conveyance of lumber, shingles, etc.; also, that he splits his own rails and gets out the frame-work of his dwelling-house and all his shingles or other covering material. If this is not done, and he hires his hauling done, it will cost him—for yoke of oxen and driver, about \$1 50 per day and board; for rails, \$1 00 per hundred and board; for shingles, \$3 50 per thousand at the stump, or perhaps less.

Making our calculation upon the settler doing the work himself, we will now estimate the total cost of making his home, and expenses say of a family of five persons—three children—until his place is completed:

First—Cost as above . . . . .	\$. 225 00
Second—Labor six months, one man and boy at customary monthly wages . . . . .	150 00
Food—Flour, grits, meal, coffee, bacon, salt—soap and other necessities, clothing, tobacco, etc., by close economy . . . . .	100 00
Total cost of place and living six months, by doing work himself . . . . .	\$. 475 00
Add to the above, cost to end of first year, another . . . . .	100 00
And for contingencies . . . . .	25 00
And we make total cost of place and grove, and living twelve months . . . . .	\$. 600 00

Now, let's estimate his chance to get his money back, and to be paid for his outlay of time, labor and money; for he has had to work pretty hard to get settled and fixed for living. Of course it would be folly to expect these one thousand orange trees, set out in new wild land, would amount to anything without cultivation and fertilizing; so, with a view to this, as also to a more speedy return for so much labor and outlay than the oranges will afford, we will suppose he plants this land in peas and potatoes (sweet,) and, in order to increase the yield, "lists" in the native grass, and on top of that makes his beds. The result will be—of

Sweet potatoes—estimating five acres as planted, al- lowing for bad luck and a very ordinary yield— one hundred bushels to the acre, or a total of five hundred bushels at fifty cents . . . . .	\$. 250 00
Peas in the hull—about the same, worth shelled about one dollar per bushel—total, one hundred and fifty bushels at one dollar (a low estimate). . . . .	150 00

Total yield for land at end of year . . . . . \$ 400 00

Thus giving to the settler his four hundred dollars of his money back, and leaving him out of pocket only one hundred and fifty-five dollars, with a year's growth added to his orange trees.

The next year, with the aid of muck, or other vegetable matter, accessible and abundant all over this section, or by putting cattle on the land, it can be made to yield—of

Corn, one hundred bushels, worth . . . . .	\$. 125 00
Fodder, peas, melons, pumpkins, etc. . . . .	50 00
And if one-half be planted in sweet potatoes, after the above crops come off, with the additional culti- vation will double the first year's yield, thus mak- ing one thousand bushels, worth . . . . .	500 00
Total . . . . .	\$. 675 00



Thus, at the end of the second year, the settler gets his money back, makes a living, and is *three hundred dollars* better off than when he started, with a thousand orange trees doing well, now three years old.

In addition, his hogs have been growing and increasing, furnishing him with all the meat he wants, and something has been realized off poultry and eggs. He has not had to work so very hard. The soil is light and easily cultivated—so easy that any child able to handle a hoe can be of some assistance in cultivating it. He has had time to hunt and go fishing, and with great success, as, with but little effort, his table is kept well supplied with game of all kinds. Also, we must not forget to mention that the little *bees* have been at work filling his “gums” with the choicest of honey.

If he has cows (and he should by all means have some,) they have afforded him plenty of milk and butter. Is not this a prospect sufficient to allure any man who desires to make a home for himself, and who is willing to work rather hard *at first* to secure it? And we might go on and show the successive yields year after year, by judicious culture, from his ten-acre field, until his orange trees occupied the ground, when the “*golden*” shower would render any further cultivation, other than for the benefit of the trees, unnecessary, because that would be a fortune in itself, acquired in from six to ten years, according to circumstances. But we consider that wholly unnecessary. Any sensible man can see for himself the glorious results that awaits the settler who properly exerts himself. Of course it is not to be supposed that he will not meet with trials and sources of annoyance during this time, and particularly at the outset of his career. But where would he be exempt from them? and they are no greater in this pursuit than they are in any other where large and gratifying results are to be derived.

At a rough estimate, the ten-acre field in orange trees, properly treated and cultivated, will be worth *ten thousand dollars*.

The crop of oranges the tenth year, at the low price of one dollar per hundred—the price here—would be worth alone at least *five thousand* dollars, and it constantly on the increase.

STOCK-RAISING—MODE, MANNER, INCREASE OF STOCK, VALUE, PROFITS, ETC.

Stock-raising on Charlotte Harbor and Peace Creek, in Manatee county, is the principle business of the majority of the population, having good grazing of thousands of acres of land, both prairie and pine land, and paying a better percentage than any other investment—at least twenty per cent. when properly managed. Stock cattle are worth six dollars per head, and, in good range properly managed, double every four years. The number of calves marked to one hundred head of stock is, on an average, twenty.

Our principle market is the island of Cuba—shipping as many as fifteen thousand head of beef from Punta Rassa in one season, at an average of fifteen dollars per head for three-years-old and upwards. The demand still continues, and, with the advantage of shipping by railroad, there is not the slightest possibility of the demand diminishing, and the range is large and inexhaustible. The cattle are never fed, winter or summer, and keep in good order during winter, and are fat and ready for market by 1st day of May; and there is no frost to kill the grass, which is of many varieties suitable for summer and winter grazing.

The gathering season usually begins about 15th of February, and continues until 1st of October. The manner of herding in the spring is: All who own cattle in a range meet together, at some carrol or pen built in the range, for marking and branding (every owner has a different mark and brand,) with their wagons and teams, corn for their horses, provisions, tents, cooking utensils, brand irons, etc. All the cow boys are mounted, have saddle-bags to carry provisions for themselves and a wallet to carry corn for their horses, with a tin

cup and boiler to make coffee for dinner. Each party of three or four go out in the morning herding up all the unmarked calves they find, drive into the carrol, or pen. In the evening, to hear them coming in, with the cow whoop and the whips popping, it is truly exciting. When the cattle are in the carrol, the gaps barred, horses unsaddled and turned loose, the next thing is supper, which is always ready, prepared by the teamster, who is hunter as well as cook. If he has failed to kill a deer, or none of the party have killed any, they resort to the carrol, and, if there has been any heretics found, kill one. (A heretic is an unmarked yearling one year old.) The process of cooking is to cut off as much as desired and stick up before the fire to barbecue. After supper, horses fed, watered and tied up, they are each telling the other the number of calves found and the owners, telling incidents, anecdotes, playing a game of old sledge for amusement, etc.

I have known a party of cow boys to run down, lasso, tie to a tree and kill a bear weighing four hundred pounds with nothing but a rope and pocket knife; also, to kill a panther by climbing to him and making him jump out, with nothing but dogs and a pocket-knife; and often run wolves down and kill them with a stirrup iron, the leather attached; often killing alligators and rattlesnakes, but they are not often found, as burning the woods has destroyed them. After planning for the next day's work, blankets are spread down, and all go to sleep. Early in the morning all is bustle—feeding horses and getting ready to mark and brand the calves. If there are any heretics, they draw straws for them. A fire is made, and all of the brands are put into it to get hot—some are letters, some figures, no two alike. It is the business of one to do all the branding. They then begin walking through the pen, and, when they find a calf sucking or following near a cow, catch it by one hind leg, another by the tail, giving it a jerk, which throws it on its side. By sitting on the calf, holding the top fore leg, the other hand

on its head, it can be turned for one to mark, and, though there are hundreds of different marks, no two are alike. After the marking is done, if none are desired to carry home to keep up for milk, and none of the beef cattle are wanted, the gap is pulled down, and all allowed to go; but, on the other hand, if some are desired, and the beef are wanted, they are separated and turned out, with a sufficient number of cow boys to mind them while the balance go out hunting, and this is continued until the range around the carrol is thoroughly hunted, and then move teams and camp equipage to another carrol, marking, branding and gathering the beef cattle until the range is well hunted. The price for marking and branding calves and gathering beef for market is fifty cents per head. The beef are driven to the shipping point, and the marks and brands are recorded by a person appointed as commissioner of marks and brands, in a book for the purpose; and, by looking on this book, a person can easily see the number of his cattle that have been sold, and draw his money from the contractor without any trouble. If one is estray, the money is retained until an owner is found. The class of cattle required are three and four-year-old steers and bulls, the lightest weighing two hundred and twenty-five pounds.

There has been of recent date introduced some fine stock (Brammer,) and there is a marked improvement in the stock since their introduction, being much heavier and better milkers. Our cows, on an average, if not too crowded, will average two quarts of milk, without being fed—much more if properly fed. The range is large, one prairie alone being about fifty miles square, with cabbage palmetto, live and water oak and pine islands; also, bays and cypress swamps, with creeks and lakes that are sufficient to supply all the water for the cattle. We never have any contagious diseases, and a cow will live to the advanced age of twenty years, and raise a calf every year, though not in all instances. When a cow gets too old, the owners usually sell her to the Key West



market, as they are preferred in that market to steers or bulls, and are cheaper. The average price on board vessel at shipping point is twelve dollars, and they will weigh, on an average, two hundred and twenty-five pounds when slaughtered, at eight cents per pound, eighteen dollars, price and freight included. By selling off old cows, none are allowed to die of old age. The price of hides is, on an average, ten cents for dry flint, and all hides are cured dry. The hide market is a good one, and always in demand—equivalent to cash. A hide will weigh, on an average, twenty-five pounds—at ten cents, two dollars and fifty cents. Tallow is always in demand, and the price is the same as hides. A beef can and will, on an average, yield twenty pounds of tallow. Butter is readily sold at twenty-five cents a pound—seldom higher or lower. Some cheese is made, though not for market—only for home consumption.

The first consideration with all stock-owners is the increase of their stock, and they usually turn out their cattle to the range by the 1st of September, only keeping a few to pasture for winter use. These are soon taught to eat, and are usually selected of the best milkers, and will give a gallon of milk, on an average, per day, milking twice a day. The cost of keeping a cow is comparatively nothing. Potatoes grow all winter, and the vines and potatoes are both excellent feed for cattle; besides, the grass remains green all winter, and there is no occasion for much feed. The cattle are never given salt. If bushels were thrown down, they would not lick it. So there is no expense, only to mark and brand, gather for market (when they get to the age of three years,) and pay the tax, which is seven dollars on the thousand and ten cents per head to the commissioner of marks and brands for recording.

HOGS—VALUE OF STOCK AND MEAT HOGS; INCREASE,  
PROFITS, RANGE, ETC.

Hog-raising on Charlotte Harbor and Peace Creek, in

Manatee county, next to cattle, is the second industry of the country, by reason of the large extent of the range and the profits to be derived from hogs if properly looked after and kept from going wild. The portion of range best for hogs is in the bays and saw grass, which are interspersed all over the range, and over the most of it acorns and palmetto berries—both cabbage and saw palmetto. We usually have a heavy palmetto berry most every other year, and hogs get as fat as they would if in a pen and have plenty of corn fed to them. The same on live oak acorns. The hogs get full fat, and there is no necessity for potatoes, etc., only to harden the fat. Hogs require constant attention to keep them from rambling and going wild, which they will invariably do if close attention is not paid to them—unless you call and feed them every night. But where they are kept off from the settlement on the range they are never fed, unless the owner kills a deer and gives them the fore-quarters, entrails, etc.

The price of stock hogs—one year old and up—is, on an average, two dollars and fifty cents per head; pigs, on an average of one dollar and fifty cents per head. We always calculate to raise, in good range, at least two litters of pigs in a year, which is a safe estimate. They will increase eight times their original number in one year, and will weigh, at two years old (a low estimate,) two hundred and fifty pounds, gross; at one year old one hundred and twenty-five pounds. Ready sale is found, for all that are raised at home, in Key West and the island of Cuba, where large numbers are shipped. The price, gross, is, on an average, five cents per pound, which is a good per centage, and but little capital is required; but the owner must pay strict attention to them to be able to control them, and must have dogs trained to hunt and rally them, or to find them in the bays, cypress and saw grass. A great many persons are profitably engaged in hog-raising, and all settlers have a small number—enough generally for home consumption, which they feed at home every

night, and thus prevent them from rambling off, and in the fall fatten them on potatoes, etc., which grow well.

The stock of hogs generally here are the common piny woods rooter, but very few of fine breed as Berkshire or Guinea having been introduced. The most hardy and preferred by hog-raisers is a black, kinky breed; they thrive, increase and grow larger than any other breed, and are free from diseases. The white hog will not thrive here, as there is a root, which all hogs eat, called paint root, which causes the hoofs of the white hogs to shed off, and also turns the meat yellow, and does not effect the black kinky hog in the least. This business has been tried, with satisfactory results, as a profitable business, and would be more profitable if the breed could be crossed with some fine stock.

SHEEP—PRICE OF STOCK MUTTON; RANGE, INCREASE, PROFIT, ETC.

Sheep-raising on Charlotte Harbor is in its infancy yet. It has only been in the past three years that sheep have been introduced, as the opinion has generally prevailed that they were very injurious to the range for cattle, causing them to get sick, and the sheep feeding on the same range, cattle would not feed after them. This opinion has been proved to be very erroneous, and a good many sheep are being introduced, and have *proved* to be very profitable and to increase very rapidly; doubling in three years can safely be depended upon. The high range is excellent for sheep. The weathers get very fat, and are worth, at two years old, on an average, four dollars per head. Stock sheep are worth with us, on an average, two dollars and fifty cents per head. They are sheared agreeable to the wish of the owner—sometimes twice, but generally only once a year. The wool is free from burs, as there are no wild burs on the range. The average weight of each fleece is two and one-half pounds, and sells readily at fifty cents per pound, unwashed. The wolves are

mostly destroyed. Dogs are the worst enemies on sheep. One gentleman bought five hundred head, sold out of the flock eighty, had killed by the dogs one hundred and twenty-five, has owned them four years, and they have doubled since he brought them in; has also sold one hundred or more to the Key West market, besides the amount he has realized from the sale of his wool.

The stock of sheep is the common Georgia stock, called scrub stock. There are no fine sheep—all common. By crossing with fine stock, they could be much improved. But from the experiments that have been tried, a good many others are now investing in sheep, and in a few years sheep-raising will be one of the great industries of the country. They do not require, as in many places, constant attention—only occasional attention. If it were not for the dogs, very little attention would be required; but all settlers have dogs which are a nuisance and no profit, and but little service. The prairie range is bordered with high pine ridges, and when the rainy season begins there are plenty of high lands for the sheep to graze upon until the water dries off, which never gets high enough on the prairies to endanger drowning. As far as has been tried, no disease has yet appeared among them, and the lambs are reared with no trouble, as there is never cold enough to require the ewes to be sheltered. In most cases two lambs are born at a birth, and are reared by the ewe without being fed. As far as tried, this climate is well adapted to sheep-raising, and has so far proved to be a good investment, yielding a good per centage on the amount of capital invested, and but little expense or attention required.

HORSE-RAISING—PROFITS, SUCCESS, RANGE, DISEASES—ON CHARLOTTE HARBOR AND PEACE CREEK, IN MANATEE COUNTY, FLA.

Horse-raising has not been engaged in to any great extent,



but some few persons have engaged in the business, and with success. The stock of horses generally raised from has been Mustang or Texas horses, and they have not done well, dying from diseases which appear to attend them from acclimating; but the mortality has usually been two-thirds of the stock put upon the range, and they are mostly abandoned. The Cuban stock has been more successfully raised, as the acclimating does not injure them but little, and if not put to service and turned loose on the prairie, they thrive and increase well. The price of Cuban mares is, on an average, seventy-five dollars per head, and, after being crossed with the American breed, are tough and stand the service (which is hard) of cow-hunting better than horses imported from Kentucky. They do not require as much feed, and will perform service equal to or better than Kentucky horses. The pony stock, as they are called, are mostly used by the population. A great many settlers raise horses only for their own use, and only a small proportion of the population raise them for sale. At four years old, they usually bring, on an average, one hundred and twenty-five dollars each. They are never fed, and keep in good order through the winter, and get very fat in summer. As far as has been tried, raising horses is a profitable investment. The prairies are covered with ponds. When the water is down, maiden cane, crab grass and other grasses spring up, and they are almost equal to a clover field. The woods and prairies are burned in June, when the horses are put upon the burns, and are occasionally moved to different places, but little attention is paid to them. They are branded, so the different owners can identify them. In the beginning of the rainy season, the horses are moved from the prairies, to prevent leeches getting in their legs, which, if not cut out soon, will spread over the whole body and soon kill them. The leeches get in them from constant standing in the water; never get in them in high prairies or pine woods. The leech resembles boiled rice, and appears to

have no vitality, yet they spread rapidly, and many horses die from the leech, as they are called. Horses also have staggers, though not to any great extent. They are mostly considered incurable. More horses die from being sanded than all other diseases combined. If not treated in time, it generally proves fatal. They also have mite, or a small insect scarcely to be seen with the naked eye, that causes the hair to shed off and the horse to gradually get weaker until he gets down and dies. There are various remedies for mite, but the most successful remedy is to wash well with soap and warm water, and then to wash well with sour orange juice. Two applications will effectually destroy them, and not injure the horse. The application of kerosene weakens the horse, and only causes the mite to remove to the parts not saturated. The demand for horses is great, and prices generally good. There has been no fine stock introduced, and the stock could be much improved. As far as the experiment of raising horses has been tried, it is a good investment, and will pay a good per centage on capital invested.

TROPICAL FRUITS—ALLIGATOR PEARS, MANGO APPLES, PINE-APPLES, COCOANUTS, DATES, SAPADILLAS, ETC.

That all of the tropical fruits will grow on Charlotte Harbor, and on the island, and in this portion of Manatee county, has been proven by experience. There has been as fine pine-apples raised here as I ever saw on the island of Cuba, and the land is well adapted to them; will bear in two years. Planted at a distance of two feet apart, they will bear one apple, and then the suckers which spring from the old stalk will bear from two to three; and when the apple is ripe, you can get two plants or more from every tree. The top is also good to plant. On Key Largo they are raised abundantly and shipped to New York.

Mango apples are an excellent fruit; have a seed like the plum, and are as large as an orange. They are a thrifty-

growing tree, and will bear in five years, from the seed. They have a large top, and are, at five years of age, from fifteen to twenty feet in diameter through the top. The fruit always demands a good price—from two and one-half to three cents each.

Alligator pears are also thrifty growers, and will bear in five years. They are much larger than the Mango; have one large seed similar to the clear-stone peach, and are equal to the cantaloupe in flavor, and are eaten the same way, with salt and pepper. One is as much as you could eat at a time. They are worth more in the market than the Mango apple. Both are delicious fruit, and grow with as little care as the orange, and bear much sooner, though they will not stand long shipments.

The cocoanut is attracting much attention, and persons are planting out large orchards. They are a hardy tree, and also slow growth; resembles the royal palm, and will bear as many as one hundred in one crop. They are always in demand, and bring a good price—never less than two and one-half cents each.

Dates also grow well, and also sapadillas and sugar apples.

Though all of these fruits grow and bear well, tropical fruit-growing is yet in its infancy, but bids fair in the future to be one of the great and paying enterprises of this section of Florida; and when the resources of this section are fully developed, and we have transportation by steamboat and railroad, we will have the garden spot of Florida, in both climate and productions, as also that great desideratum, health, and free from malaria and excessive cold or heat—thermometer 92° in the shade (highest.) And all who are here can enjoy their religious or political opinions without prejudice or strife. The popular feeling here is to welcome all, and to know no North or South, but to welcome all alike, to abide by the laws, and to put down mob law.

## BANANA GROWING.

Only a few years past has there been any attention paid to raising bananas, but, from the experiments that have been made, they have proved to grow well and to yield a handsome profit. They grow very rapidly, and bear in two years; are an excellent fruit, and are worth from fifty cents to one dollar a head. Some heads have as many as two hundred bananas on them, and are readily shipped to market, as they can be gathered before they are thoroughly ripe, and retain their flavor. They are perfectly healthy, being easily digested either raw or cooked. They grow best on low hammock land, or in bays, and require but little cultivation, as they are very thick, and shade the land, which prevents vegetation from growing. One acre in bananas, after they begin to bear on hammock or bay land, will support a family, and but little capital or labor is required. After being once planted, they never have to be transplanted. When the old stalk begins to grow, suckers spring up from the ground all around. Only begin with a few plants, and you will soon have enough to cover five acres. There are a great many varieties. The French are preferable, being better flavored, though the Horse are the most hardy, and yield well. Though not worth so much on the market, they are excellent to cook. The plantain is also delightful cooked; are long and large, and bear well.

ORANGES—COST OF PLANTING, CLEARING AND FENCING;  
YIELD, PROFITS AND GENERAL REMARKS.

Orange culture in our section is the leading enterprise of the past five years, and there are but few groves that are bearing many oranges, as most persons thought there was no profit in raising them so far south, where there was no transportation, and only planted a few for shade and home consumption. They knew nothing of the real value of an orange grove, or how to cultivate them; but time has proved



that this section cannot be excelled by any portion of Florida—the soil being well adapted, free from disease, and no frost to injure them, which is the great desideratum in raising a grove. The writer is well acquainted in all the lower counties, from the Fernandina and Cedar Keys Railroad to the Everglades of Florida, and in no portion can there be shown better and more thrifty orange trees than on Peace Creek, Charlotte Harbor and the Caloosahatchee River, both on pine and hammock land, though high land is preferred; but if well drained, orange trees thrive well, and often bear at six years old, though generally at eight. As a general rule, we expect to have some of the fruit for market before the tree is eight years old.

A great many persons are under the impression that to secure an orange grove there is nothing to do except to plant it (which is a mistaken idea,) and that no capital is required.

To buy the land, if State land—four acres at one dollar per acre; if in small quantities, from five to twenty-five dollars, owing to location. To plant a grove of four acres—five dollars per acre. To have the land cleared, grubbed, fenced and planted, it will cost twenty-five dollars per acre, if high pine land; if hammock, fifty dollars. This is a fair estimate, and I know it from precedent. The best fertilizer is to sew in peas and plow them in, and to keep the grass and weeds near the tree hoed up and mixed with leaves or grass to keep up moisture, and which also prevents grass and weeds from growing near the tree. We plant trees from twenty-five to thirty feet apart, and in the old groves the branches meet. A guava tree is planted between each orange tree. They need no fertilizing, as the leaves that shed fertilize them. When they become in the way, cut them down. As to grafting or budding in sour stumps, lemon or shaddock, we have no particular time; we graft when convenient. Limes, lemons and citrons grow well. An orange grove can be made earlier from the sour orange, lemon and shaddock than from seed-

lings. The orange grown in this section will compare with that of any portion of the State, though the business is not so extensively engaged in.

#### LAKE OKEECHOBEE CANAL, AND DRAINAGE OF THE EVERGLADES.

The all-absorbing topic with us is the great enterprise of a ship canal through Lake Okeechobee, from the Gulf to the Atlantic; and to reclaim the vast area of swamp and overflowed lands bordering the lake, on the Caloosahatchee River, and the Everglades, inspires new life and energy among the settlers all along the line. The old, bronzed, way-worn settler, whose locks have become silvered and face streaked with age pioneering the rough and rugged paths of a frontier life, seems to hitch on to a new life, half rejuvenated, and believes that he will himself witness the accomplishment of this great enterprise and the development of this highly favored region, while he is perfectly confident that those hardy sons and daughters of his, who have shared with him the privations and inconveniences of a frontier life, will enjoy to the fullest extent the great advantages to be derived from the fully-developed Southern Peninsula. The route has actually been surveyed, the land bought, and all preliminary steps have been taken preparatory to beginning the great work. From all the preparations being made, the work will soon commence to turn loose the pent up waters of the great Southern lake into the Gulf, with a fall of twenty feet from the former to the latter; millions of acres of lands adapted to farming and fruit culture will be reclaimed, and it will be one of the brightest spots in America. Instead of the howling of the wolf and hooting of the owl, we will hear the ax and saw, and this vast unknown region will become one grand scene of enterprise and industry. Instead of the smell of malaria, and alligators and snakes, we will have sugar farms, orange groves, bananas, guavas, pineapples, and all tropical fruits,

while broad, extensive meadows will clothe themselves with grass, and herds of thousands of cattle may luxuriate and grow fat, producing the finest beef in the world. It has been proven that in no country can better sugar-cane be raised than on the Caloosahatchee River, or finer oranges or pineapples, or more vegetables to the same amount of land. The cost of clearing, fencing, planting and making up a crop of cane is fifty dollars per acre, and the yield one hundred dollars, and cane can be ratooned for ten years or longer.

When this great enterprise is accomplished, there is no doubt but this will be one of the finest sections in the country for all tropical fruits. Being below the frost line, and in connection with transportation, it seems that this unknown watery region bids fair, from all indications, to become one of the most fertile, healthy and prosperous portions of Florida—as all the tropical fruits thrive well (also, farm productions,) and the forests abound with game and the waters with fish.

#### DESCRIPTION OF CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER, TWELVE MILE CREEK, FORT MYERS, AND THE CANAL.

Traveling southeast from Fort Ogden, you arrive at Prairie Creek, which heads in the Big Prairie and runs west, forms a junction with Shell Creek, and empties into Peace Creek. There are some high pine lands on both of these creeks; also, some good hammock land. It is but sparsely settled, as most of the land is prairie. It is twenty miles from Shell Creek to Caloosahatchee River. The lands are low, with prairie, cypress swamps and flat palmetto woods; are too low for settlement, but furnish excellent grazing for cattle. On both sides of the Caloosahatchee River, up to Fort Thompson, there are some fine lands, hammock and pine. The Caloosahatchee rises in Lake Flirt, and ten miles further east is Lake Kickpochee, which covers a township of land; three miles further to the eastward is Lake Okeechobee, which is forty miles across, and has a fall of twenty feet to Charlotte

Harbor. The land on Lake Okeechobee is mostly saw grass, prairie and hammock, and, by being drained by the canal, will all be reclaimed, and will grow corn, rice, sugar-cane, or any tropical fruit. Twelve Mile Creek—being called so by being twelve miles from Fort Myers—is thickly settled, and the principal crops are sugar-cane and orange trees.

The yield of cane is said to be as good as on the Island of Cuba, and fully matures as it tassels, and there is nothing more beautiful than a cane field in full tassel. Orange trees are planted in the hammocks and grow fine; some of them have borne in six years. Between Twelve Mile Creek and Fort Myers the land is low pine, palmetto and cypress ponds.

Fort Myers has a population of four hundred, an academy, a Methodist Church, three stores, one drug store, one drinking saloon, a post-office and a telegraph office. It is a quiet, orderly place and is the headquarters of the cattle trade, eighteen miles from Punta Rassa, the great shipping point of South Florida. The Caloosahatchee is a deep river, though at the mouth the channel is narrow and crooked and full of oyster bars. Pineapples and bananas are successfully raised, and also all kinds of vegetables. The growth of the hammock land is live oak and cabbage palmetto. From Fort Myers to Punta Rassa the lands are low, pine, palmetto and cypress swamps and only fit for grazing purposes, as also south of Fort Myers to the Big Cypress, though Capt. Duval reports having found a fairy land and plenty of coffee growing wild, or a berry that is equally as good. The Everglades remain to be explored. They are at present occupied by one hundred and ten Indians who are peaceable.

#### DESCRIPTION OF PEACE CREEK AND TRIBUTARY STREAMS EMPTING THEREIN, AND OF FORT MEADE.

After leaving Fort Ogden, traveling north at a distance of eight miles, you reach Josh's Creek, which is twenty miles long and thickly settled on both sides by a prosperous people.



The lands are high pine lands, all have orange groves, and the land is well adapted to farming and fruit growing; they are State lands and worth one dollar per acre. The land continues high and is partly settled, up to Big Charleyapopka River which empties into Peace Creek. The land on both sides of the river is high pine State land and subject to entry; this is a large settlement and all have orange groves. Fifteen miles beyond is Popash, the post-office; it is situated in the centre of a large settlement and plenty of vacant land well adapted to farming and fruit growing. Three miles beyond Popash is the telegraph office.

The next creek is Little Charleyapopka. Here the lands are mostly low, and continue so until within three miles of Bowlegs' Creek. After crossing Bowlegs' Creek you reach a high country called the deadening, from the fact that all the pine timber died years ago. The Indians say it was caused by hail, and that the bugs got into the timber and caused it to die. The land is now grown up with willow, oak and pine saplings.

Three miles from Bowlegs' Creek you reach Fort Meade, which is situated in the centre of a high pine country and on the west side of Peace Creek. It has five hundred inhabitants, five stores, two churches, a fine school and one drug store. In one mile square it has two thousand bearing orange trees, and two hundred thousand trees not bearing, and the trees cannot be excelled in the State. (Fort Meade is sixty miles from Fort Ogden.) Peace Creek, with capital and enterprise, could be made navigable eight months in the year. On both sides of it are thousands of acres of land adapted to farming, fruit growing or raising vegetables for the Northern market.

Bartow, situated fifteen miles north of Fort Meade, is the county seat of Polk county, the banner county in the State, not a drinking saloon in the county. In the vicinity of Fort Meade the lands are all bought up, and are worth, for unim-

proved, five dollars per acre. There are several streams emptying into Peace Creek—on west side Whidden Creek, which runs through a high pine country, Payne's Creek, Brushy Creek, Oak Creek and Horse Creek, which empties in three miles above Fort Ogden, on which Pine Level, the county seat of Manatee county, is located. The lands on both sides are mostly high, and thousands of acres that still belong to the State, and at no distant day will be second to no lands in the State for oranges and all the tropical fruits, as the frost never injures their growth.

#### SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, SOCIETY, TAXATION, POLITICS, ETC.

Great interest is being manifested in the cause of education throughout the section of country referred to, and every neighborhood that can make up ten or more pupils, has the benefit of its proportion of the free school funds, which are derived from the State by taxation, from the sale of State lands, and from fines levied by courts of law, for violation of the criminal laws of the State. Unfortunately, however, the amount thus realized is not sufficient to sustain the schools but three months during the year, but it is expected that by a slight increase in the school tax—or great economy on the part of the school authorities—the schools can be maintained *free to all* for five months in the year. At present, we cannot claim a *strictly free school system*, as the teachers are employed by the County Board of Instruction, through its superintendent, on the *recommendation* of the patrons, who make the best bargain they can with the teacher. The county allows him one dollar per month per pupil, according to his returns, and the patrons make up to him the balance. The result is, the teacher is in doubt as to whom (the county or his patrons,) his obligations most are due, and persons who have children to educate, and are not able to bear their share of the expense, receive no benefit whatever.

But, notwithstanding these drawbacks, and the further fact

that the class of teachers employed are too often indifferent and lack experience and ability, the result has been to create a great interest in the cause of education throughout the entire country, and, in addition to the free schools (so-called,) private schools, well attended, are maintained in the more thickly settled sections the greater part of the year. Of churches or "meeting-houses," there are sufficient to satisfy the most zealous in this particular. They, however, are confined to the Missionary Baptist and Methodist denominations, each of whom hold services at the principal points through their circuit riders, having no resident ministers. Though the membership of these churches is small, compared to the population, yet it is not to be attributed to any lack of zeal or effort on the part of the ministers of the Gospel, whom, unlike the divines of our populous sections, have no thousands of dollars a year to incite them to exertion, but seem to be content with the consciousness that they are engaged in a *good* work, and receive no stated salary. And were it not for the fact that the rules or "discipline" of these churches are so extremely orthodox and puritanical in their character, amounting to positive prohibition of the most innocent means of recreation, there is no doubt but what the membership would be greatly increased. The influence of these little churches and Sabbath schools (for each neighborhood has the latter) is undoubtedly very beneficial, and goes a long way toward maintaining law and order.

#### TAXATION, POLITICS, SOCIETY, LAW AND ORDER, ETC.

The rate of taxation for the year 1880 aggregated about one dollar and seventy cents per one hundred dollars' worth of property. It is expected the rate of per cent. will be decreased for 1881, owing to a more thorough assessment of property than what has heretofore been made, and an increased estimate of the same. Moreover, the many settlers moving into the county during the past year has added mate-

rially to the wealth of the county, particularly in the matter of real estate. Heretofore, under an absurdity which existed in the law exempting from taxation the dwellings and other improvements of "squatters," or those who did not own the land they lived on, the inducement was *not to buy land*, because when bought the land and improvements became subject to taxation. But the Legislature, at its last session, made the improvements of these so-called "squatters" subject to taxation, and, at the same time, constituted the payment of the taxes assessed a pre-emption on the lands on which such improvements were situated—thus enabling a settler of limited means to secure his land for *twelve* months by the payment of his taxes. A very good and just law, and had the Legislature but have gone a little further and required of speculators, and others applying to enter lands throughout the southern counties, good and satisfactory proof that such lands were wholly *unimproved*, it would have saved great injustice to some hard-working men, who after years of labor and privation in making places from the "stump," constantly looking forward to the day when they would be able to purchase their lands, have found out recently that they were *too slow*, and, unfortunately, *too poor*, as speculators and capitalists abroad having money to spare have not hesitated to *enter them out*. Surely our legislators have been remiss in this matter. They well knew the situation of a large number of the people, and should have made some provision of law for their protection.

Prior to 1876, and since the war, the State was controlled by the Republican party, and, during that time, the rate of assessment amounted to about two dollars per one hundred dollars—necessarily increased by expenses incident to a change of administration, the greater cost of living, and the confusion resulting from the close of a long and bloody war, when the State was overrun with lawless characters, whose prosecution was attended with heavy expense. Moreover,



court-houses had generally to be erected, jails, churches and school-houses erected, and the school system established. All this had to be done with a bankrupt treasury to start with, and a State government heavily involved. The rate of taxation was, however, by unthinking persons not aware of the circumstances, and of what had to be done, considered exorbitant and unreasonable, and the consequence was that when "reform and retrenchment" was promised by the Democracy, the people, after maintaining two successive Republican administrations, flocked into the Democratic party in sufficient numbers to give them a bare majority, and thus enable them to assume control of the affairs of state. The census of 1880 gives Manatee county nine hundred and thirteen voters, of which about *thirty* are colored. In the national election, the Republican party polled one hundred and sixty-two votes, showing a considerable increase over previous elections.

But we must control ourselves, and not *talk politics*, though somewhat difficult to do, because as an American citizen, devoted to the interests of this great country, we cannot help feeling an intense interest in such matters, on which we know depends the perpetuity of this free government and the interests of every man, woman and child in it.

To come down to facts: The poll tax is one dollar; the State tax, for realizing amount necessary to carry on the affairs of government, is seventy cents per one hundred dollars; for school purposes, ten cents per one hundred dollars is levied; about forty cents per one hundred dollars to form a fund for ultimate redemption of State debt; ten cents per one hundred dollars to pay the interest on said bonds. The county levies forty cents for county government purposes; thirty or forty cents for school purposes; from ten cents to thirty cents for building fund; and so it runs up. Every able-bodied male citizen between the ages of eighteen and forty-five (except ministers of the Gospel) is subject to militia duty and road duty, though the latter can be commuted by

the payment of fifty cents per day for the number of days required to work, not exceeding six in a year. The *militia* duty amounts to *nothing*, as there is no *organization*.

Circuit court is held twice each year at the county-seat, presided over by a judge appointed by the Governor, whose jurisdiction extends over several of the adjacent counties; where court is held on stated occasions fixed by law. There are no other courts except those held by justices of the peace in their respective districts.

Notwithstanding the opportunities which the character of the country would seem to afford for the concealment of criminals and their escape, and the inconveniencies which inevitably attend the enforcement of the law in an extensive and thinly settled county, interspersed with vast swamps and other hiding places, the perpetration of crimes of a serious nature are very rare. Instances of robbery from the person, or from a dwelling, are very unusual, and but few persons consider it necessary to use locks, bolts or bars to their dwellings. The taking of life for the purpose of robbery is wholly unknown here, an instance of that character never having occurred; and we look upon this as another evidence of our mild and salubrious climate. The settler revels in such a wealth of the "good things" that nature has so abundantly provided—he finds that he can so easily, by making a reasonable effort of labor, procure so many luxuries that elsewhere cost money, and cannot be got without it, that he prefers not to run the risk necessary to secure sudden wealth. And then the natural query with him would be, "Where would I go to spend it? I don't want to leave *this*, my home, for there is nowhere in the wide world I would be so content as here; and *here* I don't want much money; I can even get along without *any*, and be comfortable and happy, realizing by my own labor and abundance, not only of the necessities of life, but many of the luxuries." The result of this state of feeling is, that people go from home leaving their houses and farms to

take care of themselves; lie down at night—without the customary round in many communities to secure bolts and bars—with doors and windows wide open, and with no visions of midnight thieves and murderers to disturb their slumbers. And a general feeling of security pervades all classes.

On the other hand, it must be admitted as a truthful representation of the true state of affairs, that homicides under circumstances not always justifiable, are occasionally committed—but they are almost always the result of sudden quarrel, gross wrong or provocation, and even these, we are satisfied, are less in proportion to the population than in many communities which pride themselves upon their observance of law and order, and where their facilities for enforcing it are much better than they can possibly be in a thinly settled section like this. It must also be admitted that a disposition to *excuse* or palliate the taking of human life—when done in retaliation for *real* or fancied wrong has been very prevalent throughout this section—but the *law* of the State is the same as in most others—it does not excuse the taking of human life, except when attacked with a deadly weapon and life is considered endangered, and there is a rapidly growing sentiment among the people to enforce this law *literally*. The “hue and cry” against Carpet Baggers so called—being in reality Northern men who would not join the Democracy, has undoubtedly had the effect of deterring many Northern men from locating in this section.

There are but few here, though the number is gradually increasing. The writer is one of two who “marching to the music of the Union” settled here at the close of the war, and has remained here continuously ever since. True to life-long convictions, and a sense of right—uninfluenced in the least degree by any feeling of bitterness or hatred, or any desire to oppress the people among which he made his home—his interests have not, as a matter of course, pecuniarily and perhaps socially, been furthered to that extent that they undoubtedly

would have been could he *possibly* and *consistently* have taken a course more in accordance with the prevailing sentiment of the people. It would be unreasonable to expect that they would look with the same regard and consideration upon one who had opposed them in their efforts to acquire their imaginary “Freedom”—helped to dispossess them of their “so called” *property* slaves—and then allied himself with the party that they were led to believe was seeking to “put the nigger” over them—as they would upon one of their “own people,” and as a natural consequence business and private interests suffered materially—but so far as *personal violence* is concerned, there never was any occasion, during the writer’s experience, actively engaged in political campaigns—holding important United States and State offices—to feel the least apprehension. And, now, with the more general dissemination of news—and the increased intelligence of the people, through the circulation of newspapers—the schools—and the visits and settlements of the people from all portions of the nation and world, the people are becoming more liberal in their views—and do not, to so great an extent as heretofore, require acceptance of their peculiar political views as a passport to their good will and kindly consideration—and we therefore feel justified in saying to any man that he can come here, express and act at the ballot-box in accordance with his political views, with as much safety as he can in any portion of the country—so far as *personal violence* is concerned.

#### COST OF LIVING.—PRICES OF LEADING NECESSARIES OF LIFE, ETC., ETC.

At this time, August, 1881, goods are selling at the following figures, and the prices enumerated have varied but little during the past five years, to wit:

Flour, \$8.50  $\text{\textcircled{P}}$  bbl., 1st. quality; Corn Meal, \$5.00  $\text{\textcircled{P}}$  bbl.; Grits, \$5.50  $\text{\textcircled{P}}$  bbl.; Bacon, 12½c.  $\text{\textcircled{P}}$  lb.; Coffee, (fair Rio) 18c.  $\text{\textcircled{P}}$  lb.; Corn, \$1.10 @ \$1.25  $\text{\textcircled{P}}$  bushel; Rice, 10c.  $\text{\textcircled{P}}$  lb.; Salt,



\$2.00 ¢ sack, (four bushel, Liverpool); Sugar, good country, 8c. ¢ lb.; Syrup, (good, made here,) 40c. ¢ gallon; Prints, 8 @ 10c. ¢ yard; Checks and Stripes, 12 @ 14c. ¢ yard; Brown Sheeting, wide, 8 @ 10c. ¢ yard; Men's Brogans, first quality, \$1.50 ¢ pair; Women's Coarse Leather Shoes, \$1.00 ¢ pair; Nails, 8c. ¢ lb., (cut;) Fresh Beef, 5 @ 6c. ¢ lb.; Fresh Pork, 6 @ 8c. ¢ lb.; Venison, 4 @ 6c. ¢ lb.; Oysters and Clams, about 50c. ¢ hundred; Sweet Potatoes, 50 @ 75c. ¢ bushel; Butter, fresh country, 25c. ¢ lb.; Goshen, 40c. ¢ lb.; Eggs, 15c. ¢ dozen; Chickens, \$3.00 ¢ dozen.

### CONCLUSION.

#### DRAWBACKS AND DISADVANTAGES.

And now to conclude our somewhat hastily written work—prepared at spare moments, when the labors of the farm, a little orange grove and stock of cattle would admit, we deem it necessary to make some reference to possible drawbacks and disadvantages that may exist. With regard to these, in our estimation, they depend altogether upon how a man is *constituted*, what his circumstances in life are, and what is requisite in his estimation, to create happiness and content. To those who are wedded to the busy round of life and all its dissipation, more especially to be found in our large towns and cities, this section would necessarily be found a very dull place. To those whose ideas of happiness and content is to be so situate that easy and frequent resort may be had to the theatre, the gambling hell, the bar-room and the brothel, this section offers but little attraction—unless they are so constituted by nature that they are able to break loose from such allurements and temptations, and come to where Nature in all its majesty and holiness reigns supreme. Not that we mean to say that there are no opportunities nor inducements for dissipation here. At Pine Level and Fort Ogden spirituous liquors are sold in any

desired quantity—but cases of intoxication are very unusual, and confirmed drunkards few and far between.

To an industrious man, able and willing to work—especially at farm work, and who is content to “labor and to wait”—South Florida possesses great and varied inducements, more especially if he is master of his own time, and has the means to enable him to settle or purchase a place, plant a grove of trees and invest in a stock of cattle, sheep, hogs or horses.

And even if not fitted by experience or endowed with health sufficient to engage extensively in these, what might be termed very laborious pursuits, we doubt if there is any place in the known world, where, if possessed of a little means, sufficient to defray the expense of employing the more laborious portion of the work done—he will be better compensated for the application of such time and labor as he is able to bestow, and the out of door exercise necessarily taken would undoubtedly have a very beneficial effect.

Thousands of men cooped up in the counting-rooms of our great cities, and behind counters, tired of their monotonous, poorly paid existence, ground down to the compliance of the whims of capricious employers, would gladly come to Florida, and turn their attention to farming and fruit culture, but unfortunately, they are possessed of one or the other of two ideas, to-wit: either that farming is very laborious and difficult to learn; or else, that it is an occupation, low, vulgar, common, beneath the notice of a gentleman. Either of these ideas are erroneous and unjust. Farming is *not hard to learn*, and as a general thing, the labor involved in the planting, cultivation and gathering of farm products, is light, easy, and agreeable.

Of course, in the settlement of a place, the clearing of land, building, etc., there is some hard work; but it is astonishing how soon a naturally healthy man becomes accustomed to that, and many instances have been known, where persons whose occupations were of a sedentary character all their

lives, have, by gradually accustoming themselves to out of door labor, been entirely restored to health. People too frequently resort to the pill-box, bitters, regulators and other patent medicines, to remove real or imaginary ailments, when, if they would *go to work* in earnest they would fare much better. We have numerous instances of men in poor health, supporting with the aid of their children, large families by the cultivation of small tracts of land, the raising of poultry, honey, hunting, fishing, etc., etc. One instance in particular, of a widow of fifty odd years, supporting comfortably a family of eight, mostly little children, by her own labor on the farm, with such assistance as they could render, and she only had about eight acres under cultivation. Off of this, she made as follows: six acres in corn made seventy-five bushels, more than enough to feed her family, (she kept no horse.) Off of the land planted in corn, she sold and realized off of peas and watermelons, apart from an abundance used in the family, one hundred dollars. Two acres planted in sweet potatoes made five hundred bushels, of which, about half were consumed at the house, and the remainder netted one hundred and fifty dollars. Off butter, chickens and eggs, besides home consumption, fifty dollars was made; while her hogs, running in the range but coming home every night for their handful of corn, made her meat—and this is not an individual instance by any means, there are plenty more to be found all over this section, where persons in delicate health, male and female, *make a good living*, and that too, by not near as steady, monotonous, continuous application of their time as is required and necessarily consequent to many of the pursuits of life, incident to our large cities.

So far as the *character* of the pursuit is concerned, what sensible man or woman can for one moment entertain the idea that it is in any way common or vulgar? Surely, if there are such, they should disdain the result of such labor, which they despise, and *quit eating*. We are strongly possessed of

the idea that if they would only try that plan, they would soon learn to respect the farmer, who feeds the world; for, say what we may regarding all the other pursuits of life, we are all dependent upon the *farmer*, and without him could not exist. Such ideas are the result of erroneous education and associations, and are only entertained by persons of weak minds, whose opinions are not worth noticing.

To persons from abroad, accustomed to the advantages and conveniences of thickly settled communities, a location here might for awhile be attended with some discomfort and discontent. We say "*might*," and, as we said before, would say again, that depends upon how they were constituted. If they took no delight in the companionship of their family, and immediate neighbors could see nothing to attract them or interest them in the beauties of nature all around, or in their daily labors—if their idea of enjoyment and satisfaction of life was to be where there was a continuous round of excitement, and where sources of artificial recreation abounded on all sides—such people as these would be *utterly miserable* here, and unless possessed of great firmness of character, sufficient to enable them to oppose the inclination to indulge in these unnatural and artificial means of enjoyment which afford only temporary gratification, we would not advise them to come to Florida, though it would be better for them—far better—did they possess the fortitude to enable them to fly from temptation. Again, some people are easily *fretted*, and what others scarcely notice occasion them great discontent. A few mosquitoes, fleas, gnats, etc., give them great annoyance; the wind blows a little too hard, or it rains a little longer than usual, or to suit their convenience. They fly into a passion, and declare that "Florida is no place for a *white* man to *live in*"—forgetting for the moment that we never have the cyclones and tornadoes common in other sections; that discomfort from snow and ice is unknown; and that our section is



free from all contagious diseases, such as *yellow fever*, small-pox, etc., so common elsewhere.

In our opinion, the inconveniencies and disadvantages under which we suffer arise altogether from the fact that the country is sparsely settled. Naturally there are no grounds for complaint; and as emigrants come into the country, stores, schools and churches become more numerous, and transportation improves, there will be no just grounds for complaint. Of course, so long as the world stands, men will be found—vampires in human form—who, seeking to live off the labor of others “by their wits,” will curse the place and people that do not afford them the opportunity to effect their object.

Unfortunately, the idea has become too common abroad that *labor* is not necessary to existence in Florida; that all a man has to do here is to put seed into the ground, and in a short time, without labor on his part, it will produce wonderful results—he living, in the meantime, on fruits, fish, game, berries, etc., to be had for the gathering. Such ideas are absurd, and while it is our candid opinion that a man can “stay” here on less labor than anywhere else in the United States, still, if he wants to *live*, and *live well*, he must *work*; and just in proportion to the amount of labor expended will he be compensated.

And now, before quitting this topic—the *disadvantages* and *drawbacks*—fearful lest we may not have been sufficiently explicit, and fully realizing the direful and distressing effects that might result to those who might be induced from reading this little book, to pack up hastily, sacrificing property, the companionship of friends and relatives, and abandoning means of a livelihood, to locate in Florida with a view to bettering their condition, we would say: Do not be in too great a hurry. If possible to spare time and means of travel, come and look around a little, and even *then*, should you conclude to locate, avoid any unnecessary outlay at the outset. Rent a place, if possible, and try the soil and climate, or, in other

words, make a temporary habitation, while you test everything and see how you like it, and whether you will be satisfied or not.

The writer has suffered, during his sixteen years in Florida, more than language can describe, from the hardships and privations incident to a life on the frontier, and the bitter recollection of what he has undergone compels him to warn all new-comers to be cautious how they break loose from old ties and associations and invest their means in a new, wild, strange country.

The consciousness that many of the hardships and privations referred to are occasioned by lack of population and the advantages which society and settlement brings with it, and that it is not the *country* that is at fault, or its natural resources or means of livelihood, justifies the writer in believing that men of energy and industry, with capital at their command, can do well here; but we wish it distinctly understood that we advise *no man* in a matter of so much importance as making a home. We have stated matters as we believe them to exist, and given our honest opinion as to what we think can be done here. Now, let every one decide for himself, and if they want our assistance as agents in locating, our services are at their command.

INCIDENTS  
OF THE  
SEMINOLE WAR IN FLORIDA  
DURING THE  
REMOVAL OF THE SEMINOLES IN THE YEARS 1856-57.

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The following sketch is introduced as illustrative of the experience of an old Indian fighter, one of the authors of this book :

In the treaty of peace between the United States and the Seminole Indians, Peace Creek, from which it derived its name—the Indian name being Tchlopkusha—was the boundary line. The whites were confined to the west and the Indians to the east, which embraced the Big Cypress and Everglades. The government decided to remove the Seminole tribe to Arkansas, claiming to have purchased their possessions in Florida, and erected a chain of forts through the reservation. A party under the command of Lieutenant Hartsuff went to Billy's Garden surveying, and pulled some bunches of bananas and left for Fort Simon Drum, which was erected at the head of the Big Cypress, and camped for the night about fifteen miles from Billy's Garden. At daylight the next morning, the Indians, under the command of Billy Bowlegs, their chief, attacked the command of Hartsuff, killing the entire party of thirty men (except one, who escaped to Fort Myers and carried the news,) and severely wounding Lieutenant Hartsuff. After shooting down four Indians, he escaped into a saw grass pond, and laid down in



the water faint from loss of blood. The Indians were afraid to venture to hunt him. They scalped and otherwise mutilated the killed, pillaged and burned the two wagons, killed the mules, and left. Lieutenant Hartsuff remained in the pond until night, and then, under cover of darkness, began to make his way to Fort Simon Drum, a distance of twenty-two miles. Weak from loss of blood, and with nothing to eat, he, at daylight the next morning, crawled into a cabbage palmetto hammock and hid himself until dark, and again began his march. In the evening of the third day he came near the fort, and heard the fife and drum beating retreat. He sat down on a log, not able to travel another step. He had his revolver, two chambers of which were loaded; if it fired, there was hope—if it failed, death. He raised the weapon, and fired, and again, and another report rang through the cypress. His companions heard it, and began to look for the Indians, and luckily found him and carried him to the fort, and in a short time he recovered. He continued in the service, always regretting he could not meet his enemy, Billy Bowlegs.

The massacre of Hartsuff's party created intense excitement, and the inhabitants fled from their homes and built forts for protection. The whole business of the country was paralyzed. Companies of volunteers were immediately organized, and the Governor had them mustered into the State service; companies of volunteers were also mustered into the United States service for six months, and a vigorous campaign commenced. Five detachments of thirty men from each company were ordered to Fort Deynaud to report to Major Arnold to scour the Cypress for the Indians, who had retreated to the Everglades. We could find plenty of signs, and sometimes see Indians, but no regular engagement took place. We returned to Fort Deynaud after a scout of thirty days, effecting nothing. Our detachment was ordered to return to Simon Drum to escort Captain Gibson, of the regular army, who

was a strict disciplinarian, to be ready to march by two o'clock in the morning. We had no tents, and a fearful rain poured down on us. Our guns, which were loaded, were wet and would not shoot. At the appointed time, we were ordered to march. After starting home, it was with great reluctance we escorted Captain Gibson a distance of thirty miles, and all of our horses badly jaded. After daylight, the captain began instructing us in military tactics, halting and ordering us to dismount for fifteen minutes, in the open prairie, in the month of June, the sun shining down hot enough to cook an egg in the sand. After one of the captain's evolutions, and we had mounted, I was riding by his side, and carried a double-barreled gun, which was empty. He remarked, seeing no caps on my gun: "Men, are your guns all charged and well primed?" Some said their's were empty, some would not shoot, some were broken—in fact, not a gun in the entire detachment could have shot had the Indians attacked us. The captain fell from his horse, ordered us to halt and dismount, and to charge and prime our guns. He threw his cap on the ground, stamping on it, and jumping up and down before us. The vocabulary of satan could not have furnished the oaths he used; he jumped and swore until he foamed at the mouth. It took some time to put our guns in shooting condition, but the captain never ceased swearing while we were performing that duty. After we were ready to march, he ordered us to form a line on foot, and inspected each gun, after which he again ordered us to mount, still swearing. I remarked to him that I did not apprehend any danger of being attacked by the Indians; whereupon he fell from his horse as though he had been shot, and again began his oaths. "Apprehend? hell and damnation!" he exclaimed. To escort one of Uncle Sam's officers through an Indian territory with not a gun in the detachment that would shoot, was without precedent, and if his brother officers knew it, they would laugh him out of the service; that we were all in dan-

ger of being massacred by the Indians. I told him there was no danger of that; if we were fired upon, we would rush for the smoke, clubbing with our guns and making short work with the Indians; that we never posted sentinels, and experienced no trouble only in finding them—always fighting them at their own game, and soon routing them by halooing louder than they did. If the captain was not reassured, he at any rate became silent, only remarking that the next time he required an escort through an Indian territory, he would not choose a lot of Florida crackers to accompany him. After finding that all of our guns were out of order, his tactics ceased, which was a great relief to us. The captain no doubt often thinks of his escort by Florida crackers.

We returned next day to Fort Deynaud and were ordered to join our companies at Fort Meade and Fort Frazier, and were granted twenty days furlough. The Chief Oscian, to draw the troops from the Big Cypress, went up to Brooksville in Hernando county, and murdered two of Capt. Bradley's children. They then returned to Simmons' Hammock in twelve miles of Tampa, and in two miles of a station of one hundred men, attacked our train, killed two men and a boy, and wounded another, robbed the wagons and went off unmolested. They caught John Carney and killed him, and came in two miles of Fort Meade, attacked Tillis about daylight, killing seven head of horses. Lieut. Carleton heard the firing, took six men and went to their relief. The Indians run in a bog and Carleton charged them, not knowing their number. Lieut. Carleton, William Parker and Lot Whidden were killed, and three of the remaining four were wounded. McCullough and an Indian had a hand to hand fight. McCullough threw the Indian and Daniel Carleton cut his throat. This news caused wide spread consternation, nearly all the volunteers were on furlough and off duty and only seventeen men could be mustered to pursue them. The Indians had got into Peace Creek Swamp and trailing them was slow and te-

dious as they would often scatter and the trailers would have often to trail a single Indian; they would again meet and cut a large trail, endeavoring to lead us into an ambuscade, which by caution we avoided.

On the third morning we heard the sound of a rifle, and started in the direction and on entering the swamp saw buzzards alighting, and on approaching the spot, saw that the Indians had butchered a beef that morning—they no doubt thought we had returned to Fort Meade. The trail from the beef to their camp was easily followed with trail arms and no noise; we took the trail and on approaching near the camp jumped their sentinel, fired several shots and dashed into their camp, with quantities of beef sticking around the fires, and their packs and camp equipage scattered around but not an Indian in sight. We marched steadily on, and when in ten feet of the river bank they opened fire upon us accompanied by the war-whoop which was deafening and could hardly be discerned from what direction; we returned the yell and dashed for the river and shot them in less than ten feet from the muzzles of our guns. The surprise to them was complete. According to their own estimate, we killed and wounded twenty-five, the chief Oscian among the slain. They had selected a short bend in the river for their camp about eight miles from Fort Meade. This was a great victory. We lost two men killed and three wounded, and learned the Indians that the Florida Cracker was a match for them and they withdrew to the Big Cypress and Everglades.

The war had now been progressing six months and the Indians were no nearer being moved to Arkansas than at the beginning. A chain of Forts from Tampa extending east to Fort Capron and south to Big Cypress and covering the entire Peninsula of Florida garrisoned by State and United States troops; a regiment under command of Col. St. George Rogers, State troops, subject to the orders of the general government, were stationed near the head of the Big Cypress, sixty miles



south-east of Fort Myers, with special orders to keep up a line of pickets along its border and to harass and capture the Indians wherever found. Capt. Stephens, who commanded a company in this regiment, was a brave, fearless and restless officer, unwilling to remain in camps, asked for and obtained permission to scout at pleasure, always taking about fifty of his best men with him, leaving the balance to take charge of his camp and equipage. Although a cavalry company, Capt. Stephens usually scouted on foot, armed with double barreled shot guns; thus armed and on foot, Capt. Stephens felt that he was equal to Billy Bowlegs in point of stratagem or skillful woodsmanship and anxiously desired to meet him anywhere, on any ground, and kept up a continual scout for Billy. Billy soon found that this scouting party were ever on the war path and watched its every footstep. He knew its strength and that it was commanded by an officer of uncommon experience and daring.

Once, while Stephens was looking for Billy in another direction, Billy Bowlegs sent his young men and cut the throats of every horse Stephens had and cut off the head of Stephens' horse and stuck it up on a pole. At another time, while a couple of Stephens' men were cutting some palmetto cabbage, Billy's scouts dashed upon them with their tomahawks killing one and chased the other within one hundred yards of Stephens' headquarters. These insults enraged the brave captain, and he was determined to have revenge. He felt, so far, that Billy had the best of him; his comrades began to tease him, and tell him to look out for his own scalp. This state of affairs was not what our brave captain desired, he was young and ambitious, and wished to distinguish himself, and chafed under the jeers of his comrades and Billy's chastisement, he resolved to change his plan of operation. To lie at the station waiting for the Indians to make their attack and be continually worried and annoyed by Billy's scouts had become too monotonous as well as dangerous. Billy, having killed all of his

horses, killed and wounded some of his best men, whooping, yelling and shooting at him every day, was more than Stephens could endure. To engage Billy under any circumstances or in a hand to hand fight, was Stephens greatest desire. Stephens knew well that Billy and his braves had a special hiding place in the Big Cypress or Everglades where they kept their families and supplies, and upon any approach to this chosen spot, would draw Billy into a decisive conflict. So in the month of December, Stephens with his command took ten days rations and on foot commenced to penetrate the Big Cypress in search of Billy's stronghold.

On entering the Big Cypress, Stephens threw out flank guards, also an advance headed by the trailer. They soon found the Indians, who would yell and shoot at them at all available points and then disappear on the near approach of Stephens' command, Billy by his manœuvring leading Stephens on and harassing him by day and night until the third day, when the Indians would yell and shoot at Stephens from all sides and continually increasing until his situation was getting critical; he was a long distance from reinforcements and he could not bring Billy into an engagement. The Indians killed his guide and trailer and he had to devise some means to extricate himself, as his ground was no longer tenable and a retreat inevitable, or himself and his command would be entirely annihilated and scalped. He ordered a charge, and Billy, as usual, retreated, to lead Stephens on to destruction. When Billy was in full retreat, Stephens suddenly turned about, fell back and took position about thirty yards of his trail, passing a hammock, and waited quietly for the result. He did not have to wait long. Very soon a cloud of Billy's warriors with painted faces came running on the trail, when, reaching the point opposite Stephens, not expecting an ambuscade, they received a murderous fire from Stephens' company, with double barreled guns and heavy buckshot into their disordered ranks; the consternation which ensued is be-

yond description. Bowlegs had not contemplated this sudden turn of affairs, and his braves were disorganized and confused. Stephens was elated and fell upon the retreating Indians with their revolvers, killing and wounding a large number; Stephens ran down an Indian and killed him that he thought was Billy, but he was one of Billy's chiefs. Stephens then returned to camp unmolested the same day. The number of killed and wounded is not known. Persons who passed over the battle ground weeks after, saw skeletons of Indians scattered in every direction, the trees were shattered and torn by the blue whistlers from Stephens' double barreled guns. The victory was complete. This battle humbled Billy so much that he was never so daring again. Speaking to the old Doctor Indian of that affair, he said: "Stephens' guns, the managers got arm broke, beat Indian too much."

The Seminole War soon closed after this, most of the Indians being removed to Arkansas. There still (agreeable to all authentic accounts,) remain one hundred and twenty-one, all told. They are rapidly improving in civilization, dress well, have horses, cattle and hogs, and speak English; one of them attends school and learns rapidly, is sober and industrious. They have houses built, have large fields, and raise corn for sale. One Indian sold this season, one hundred and twenty-five bushels of corn. They are perfectly friendly and will give you the best they have to eat if you go to their homes. The most of them still live in the Big Cypress where there is plenty of good hammock land and plenty of game. Billy was killed by one of his own warriors on their way to Arkansas. He was a splendid looking Indian and a brave warrior.

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